

A BOY'S-EYE VIEW OF THE ARCTIC

▼
RAWSON

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Title: A Boy's-Eye View of the Arctic

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Contributor: Donald B. MacMillan

Release Date: April 27, 2022 [eBook #67944]

Language: English

Produced by: Steve Mattern, David E. Brown, and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <https://www.pgdp.net> (This book was produced from images made available by the HathiTrust Digital Library.)

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A BOY'S-EYE VIEW OF THE ARCTIC ***

A BOY'S-EYE VIEW OF THE ARCTIC



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TORONTO



Kennett L. Rawson, June, 1925.

A BOY'S-EYE VIEW OF THE ARCTIC

BY
KENNETT LONGLEY RAWSON
CABIN-BOY OF THE *BOWDOIN*

Introduction by
COMMANDER DONALD B. MACMILLAN

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1926
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Published October, 1926.

Printed in the United States of America by
THE FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY, NEW YORK

TO MY MOTHER
Bravest of them all.

Illustrated with photographs taken by the author, and others loaned through the courtesy of Commander Donald B. MacMillan; National Geographic Society, taken by Maynard Owen Williams, photographer of the Expedition; Ralph P. Robinson, Mate of the *Bowdoin*; Onnig D. Melkon, moving picture photographer of the Expedition; Alfred Brust, Staff Photographer of the *Boston Herald*, and George Warren Lord, Staff Photographer of the *Boston Post*.

INTRODUCTION

TO the lecturer the introduction is the most interesting part of his lecture, in that it is generally so complimentary that his feeling of guilt and a sense of his own inferiority mars somewhat his whole discourse. My cabin boy, Kennett Rawson, suffers no handicap in this respect. His work is finished. Whatever I may write will not affect its status. His narrative stands as a testimonial of the influence of good and much reading. Very few will believe that such language is natural for a fourteen-year-old boy. But we knew "Ken" in the forecabin of the little *Bowdoin*, and teachers at Hill School who have watched his progress for two years can assure you that the book is his own.

How fortunate that a boy in his early teens could visit the scenes of our early explorers, the headquarters of the great Peary, who, by his work, has placed before American youth the finest example of persistency, determination, and clean grit in all Arctic history. What a privilege for young Rawson to stand where the immortal Elisha Kent Kane stood with lifted ramrod and fluttering cap lining, the first to step foot on historical Littleton Island, and to enter the Basin which bears his name!

From the heights about Etah he has looked across to the ice-covered hills of Ellesmere Land and Cape Sabine where Greely and his men lay dying in 1884 and where Peary fought a losing fight in 1900-1902. He has seen the last of the *S. S. Polaris*, which steamed farther north than ship ever steamed, now strewn about the beach rusting, rotting away. But memories of her Commander, the most enthusiastic of all Arctic explorers, will always live.

Something more than pure sentiment. No boy can look upon such things, can dwell upon the deeds of such men as Kane, Hayes, Hall, Greely and Peary, without standing a little more erect, without visualizing his own future and determining to have that future count for something beyond material gain.

With mingled feelings of apprehension, doubt as to the wisdom of my decision, I signed Kennett Rawson on the ship's papers as "Cabin boy, Chicago, age 14," the youngest white lad ever to go into the Far North.

Under starlit skies and unruffled sea; in the semi-darkness of his 10-11 watch, I watched him as he stood at the wheel “giving her a spoke” now and then to keep her on her course, his small sheepskin-covered form outlined against the black of the ocean. In howling winds and with the *Bowdoin* plunging and bucking head seas, decks awash and life lines stretched, the same huddled form, eyes on the compass card, doing his best, with never trace of quit, I, a shipmate for four months, knew him. Young Rawson made good. For that reason he goes back again with me in the Northland one week from to-day, back to the big grey hills of Labrador with their outlying, breaking reefs, to the inner reaches of its green bays, to its simple, sincere people; to Greenland, once the home of the Norsemen, now the land of the Dane and smiling half-breed; to Baffin Island, the Meta Incognita of Martin Frobisher, the objective of many an old New England whaling ship.

May he enjoy this fourth cruise of the *Bowdoin* as he did her third. “The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts,” and when those thoughts or dreams are realized, doubly fortunate is youth.

DONALD B. MACMILLAN.

Freeport, Maine.
June 12, 1926.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	<u>ix</u>
CHAPTER	
I. HERE ENDETH THE LESSON	<u>1</u>
II. UNDER WEIGH	<u>14</u>
III. IN THE LAND OF ADVENTURE	<u>22</u>
IV. A TRULY GLORIOUS FOURTH AND SOME VERY REAL FISHING	<u>32</u>
V. THROUGH THE PACK TO DISASTER	<u>41</u>
VI. THE HEROES OF HOPEDALE	<u>49</u>
VII. IN ESKIMO LAND AND IN TROUBLE	<u>56</u>
VIII. GREENLAND!	<u>66</u>
IX. ICE AND MORE ICE	<u>76</u>
X. WE TAKE THE AIR	<u>89</u>
XI. MY FARTHEST NORTH	<u>107</u>
XII. WE BREAK INTO SOCIETY	<u>115</u>
XIII. STORM AND STRESS AND—HOME!	<u>130</u>

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Kennett L. Rawson, June, 1925

[*Frontispiece*](#)

FACING
PAGE

The journey of the *Bowdoin*, 1925 (map) [1](#)

The *Bowdoin* and her crew, Wiscasset, Maine, June 20, 1925.

John Jaynes, Engineer; Commander Donald B. MacMillan;

Ralph P. Robinson, Mate; Kennett L. Rawson,

Cabin Boy; John Reinartz, short wave radio expert;

Martin Vorce, Cook; Lieutenant Benjamin Rigg, U. S.

Coast and Geodetic Survey; Onnig D. Melkon, moving

picture photographer [12](#)

Outward Bound, June, 1925 [20](#)

The *Bowdoin* leaving the dock at Wiscasset [20](#)

Rawson, MacMillan at the wheel, and Dr. Grosvenor. On

way to Sydney [27](#)

“Yonder beneath the North Star lies our destination, Lad.” [27](#)

Commander MacMillan, Dr. Grosvenor and Dr. Grenfell,

Battle Harbor [27](#)

Maynard Williams (left), photographer, National Geographic

Society; Lieutenant Benjamin Rigg (right), U. S. Coast

and Geodetic Survey [61](#)

The *Bowdoin* passing an iceberg off west coast of Greenland [63](#)

The *Bowdoin* caught in a nip, at Melville Bay [63](#)

Commander MacMillan with an Eskimo child; in flying

costume;

in the ice barrel [90](#)

Brother John’s Glacier and Alida Lake, Etah, North

Greenland [90](#)

The *Peary* [94](#)

Expedition plane at stern of *Bowdoin* [94](#)

Launching first plane at Etah	<u>95</u>
Eskimo kiddie with mother's coat on	<u>104</u>
Even Eskimo boys of Ig-loo-da-houny have a sweet tooth	<u>104</u>
In-you-gee-to makes a coil of rawhide line out of skin of which he is justly proud	<u>105</u>
The only Eskimo family in Etah	<u>105</u>
The <i>Bowdoin</i> on the rocks in North Greenland	<u>118</u>
Head of 2000-pound walrus killed at Etah, North Greenland	<u>118</u>
Oomiak: Eskimo women's boat, made of sealskins	<u>119</u>
South Greenland kayak	<u>119</u>
At Sukkertoppen	<u>122</u>
Dick Salmon with large cod jigged while stormbound in Godthaab	
Fiord	<u>123</u>
A good Eskimo puppy	<u>126</u>
Typical winter home of South Greenland Eskimo	<u>126</u>
Eskimo girls of Holsteinborg, mixture of Danish, Spanish, English and Eskimo	<u>126</u>
View of Godthaab with statue of Hans Egede, first missionary to the Eskimos of Greenland	<u>130</u>
Norse Church at head of Godthaab Fiord, probably built about 1100 A. D.	<u>130</u>
In rough weather off Nova Scotia, homeward bound	<u>131</u>
The <i>Bowdoin</i> delayed by the storm at Monhegan	<u>131</u>

A BOY'S-EYE VIEW OF THE ARCTIC



The journey of the *Bowdoin*, 1925.

A BOY'S-EYE VIEW OF THE ARCTIC

I HERE ENDETH THE LESSON

ONE warm June evening I was sitting up in my room supposedly studying, but actually all thoughts of study had long since gone where most good resolutions go. Who can study on a mild June evening anyway? I can study almost any other time, but on such occasions my thoughts go flue, and I am off to Treasure Island or with Jules Verne. I was somewhere in those latitudes when a rap sounded on my door. I thought just retribution had overtaken me in the form of a master; so I opened a text book, scattered a few papers about for realistic effect and then went to the door.

“Long distance for you at the exchange,” said the messenger, who after all was not a master.

I slipped into my bathrobe and reported to the master on the hall.

“Sir, long distance wants me at the exchange,” I said.

“All right, here’s your permission slip. Get it signed when you are through. And Rawson—don’t loaf on your way back.”

“No, sir,” I said, and with this parting injunction I was off.

I took down the receiver, got my connection and yelled “hello.”

“Hello, Ken, that you?” It was Dad, and there was a note of excitement in his voice. “Do you want to go to the Arctic with MacMillan this summer?”

I leaned against the panel. Was I still with Jules Verne?

“What, Dad? Say it again.”

Dad laughed. “Do you want to go to the Arctic with MacMillan this summer?”

“With MacMillan? With MacMillan?” I gasped! What was he trying to put over? Well, at last it got across, and it didn’t take me long to say yes. He then told me how it all happened, and my surprise and wonderment increased at every word. At last he had to hang up, and I went back to my room in a haze. I could hardly grasp the significance of what I had just heard. A few minutes before I was merely a student at The Hill; now I was an explorer. Well of course not quite that, but something along that line, and anyway I was going on an Arctic expedition and that’s all that mattered.

I returned to my hall and reported to the master in charge.

“Where is your slip?” he said rather shortly.

“My slip? I forgot to have it signed. Oh, sir, MacMillan and I are going exploring in the Arctic regions!”

The master looked incredulous, but as I still retained the air of being partly sane, he began to show real interest.

“How did you happen to choose MacMillan?” he queried.

“Oh, sir, I didn’t mean that, I meant that Commander MacMillan is going to take me with him this summer,” I replied, rather embarrassed by my outbreak.

“Well, just how did you get in on a thing like this?” he asked.

“For several summers I have sailed,” I said, “and I like the sea. Last summer I was engaged in the scientific work of the Bureau of Fisheries on a little schooner. We made a number of trips off shore, and I gained quite a bit of experience. I liked the work so well that I told father that I thought I should like to be an explorer instead of a banker—father’s business. A friend of father’s, Mr. Joseph MacDonald, being acquainted with these facts and also with Commander MacMillan, conceived the idea that I ought to go on the forthcoming expedition with the Commander. I fear he must have strained a point in telling of my qualifications for a berth on the ship, but he finally persuaded the Commander to take me. After this he broke the good news to father. Then the two of them had the difficult task of convincing Mother that I ought to go. My mother is like most mothers, only a little more so, and it was quite a job to show her that the undertaking was not too dangerous and that it would be a valuable experience. She was finally won over, and so that’s how I am going.”

“Well,” said the master, “some people do seem to have all the luck. Go to your room quietly, and remember that we’re still keeping school around here.”

“Yes, sir,” I said, and I went out. He had forgotten all about the slip!

If I worked hard, I had a chance of getting exempt from my examinations at the end of the term. That meant I could go home seven days earlier than otherwise. When I had calmed down, I made up my mind that no dust was going to collect on my books from then on. Too much depended on my plugging; so I tried to put away the thoughts of nice arctic coolness on a hot June night and bury myself in my books.

The days went quickly by. They were happy days filled with hard work between which came rosy dreams of the future—the prelude to the great adventure. But at last came the important day—the day on which the list of exemptions from examinations was to be posted. I parked myself outside the Dean’s office anxiously awaiting that list. No vacation ever had seemed so far away, and the minutes were ninety seconds long. At last a figure appeared from within, armed with the list and a handful of thumbtacks. There was a wild mob there by that time, but I was in the front row. I ran my eye down the alphabet. My fate was before me. It was there—my name. Exempt in everything! With a yelp of joy I rushed for my room feeling for my trunk key on the way. Somehow I got my trunk packed, did the things that had to be done before leaving, and that night at dinner I had everything ready for an early departure in the morning.

The next day, amid the good wishes of my somewhat envious school friends, I bade farewell to The Hill and started for home. There I would have a few days with my family and plenty of time to select my outfit before going on to Wiscasset, Maine, to join the expedition. On the train I did not buy any magazines. I just sat there and shot polar bears and dodged icebergs; and what a grand and glorious feeling it was!

The family were at the train to meet me, and we all had so much to say that nobody could wait for the other person to finish. Mother was so happy that I could go and so unhappy because I would not be home for the vacation, that she didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. Father was so enthusiastic that he wanted to go himself.

I had about a week before joining the expedition; this time I employed in getting my equipment ready. I needed all manner of things, and without a list which the Commander had furnished, we should not have known what to get. Oilskins and rubber boots for wet weather were very necessary, as were all sorts of warm things such as knit socks, heavy underwear, flannel shirts, woolen trousers and a sheepskin coat, to name but a few of the items. I also laid in a big stock of five-and-ten-cent-store trinkets for trading with the Eskimos. The Commander had suggested rings, necklaces, beads, perfume, soap and various novelties, most of which certainly went like hot cakes with the Eskimos.

At last the day arrived on which I must leave home for the last time until my return from the north, probably in a few months, but very possibly not for several years, maybe never. The Arctic keeps one guessing if it does nothing else. One never can tell what successes or disasters the next day holds.

The family were not coming east with me now, as it was necessary for me to go on a few days early to help in the work of preparation. The family, however, were coming on for the official farewell which was not to be until a week later. On my way to Wiscasset, where the *Bowdoin* was being outfitted, I stopped in New York and joined forces with Dick Salmon, another member of the expedition. We continued our journey by steamer to Portland and there we caught a local to Wiscasset. The afternoon of the fifteenth, the day on which we were supposed to arrive, found us bumping along and wishing that the train would make more speed. But after what seemed years, the end of our trip hove in sight as we suddenly rounded a curve. With beating hearts we gathered our luggage and prepared to disembark. The train halted just opposite where the *Bowdoin* was anchored, and we stared with interest and admiration at our new home, for such she proved to be for the next four months. We hailed a passing launch and her skipper put us aboard our ship. We at once reported for duty to the mate, Mr. Robinson, who was in charge of the loading. He seemed rather surprised when he saw me, and he said, "Why, I was told you were a great, big fellow weighing a hundred and sixty pounds." As I fell some pounds short of his expectation, I told him that somebody must have been kidding him. I think we both knew who it was. I had strong suspicions, anyway. He at last decided that if I could work, that would help matters quite a bit. So

he told me to be ready for work early next morning and meanwhile to make myself at home and get acquainted with the members of the expedition who already had arrived.

I took a look around. The deck was piled high with boxes and barrels; the running rigging was all askew on the deck—in short, chaos reigned everywhere. This was far different from what I had pictured, and I decided right then and there that when it comes to actual work, getting the ship north was no more of a job than loading it. I also saw several dishevelled workmen busily engaged in stowing the cargo in various parts of the ship. I inquired from the mate who they were, and my disillusionment was complete when he told me they were two scientific experts with national reputations. I had always thought of scientists as not quite human, people who sat around looking into instruments and writing elaborate reports. But seeing them pitch in and work like normal human beings did much to restore my confidence that they were real he-men.

I looked the ship over from stem to stern. She certainly is a beauty with lines almost as clean-cut as a yacht. But her timbering would make a yacht's look like a melon crate. She has the most massive timbers of any ship I ever saw, and I think I may safely say that she is the strongest small vessel in existence. Another very excellent feature for Arctic work is the way the hull is shaped. It is so rounded that the ship rises when squeezed by the ice. This is the only way that an Arctic vessel should be built; as no matter how strong the vessel may be, she cannot withstand the pressure of heavy ice unless she is made to rise. The bow also is sloping, so that she may rise a short way on a cake of ice and crush it with her weight. At the point of impact it is armored with a heavy iron plate to give additional strength. A rather unusual feature for Arctic vessels is also incorporated in the *Bowdoin*, namely, having the vessel reach its full beam a short way abaft the mainmast which, in a schooner, is quite near the stern. This serves to shunt the ice away from the propeller, and anything to protect the propeller is very helpful, as the breaking of a propeller in the ice is a disaster second only to having the ship crushed; without strong means of propulsion one cannot get very far, and sails are a poor substitute for a propeller. She has a semi-Diesel engine which will run on anything from whale oil to kerosene. If we ran out of fuel in the north, we would literally "harpoon our way home," to quote the Commander. In spite of all these

features, she is only a small vessel, eighty-eight feet over all, fifteen tons net. She is, I believe, the smallest vessel ever to enter the Arctic.

By the time we had finished our inspection, it was quitting time, and our scientist-stevedores knocked off work and began to prepare to go ashore. Dick and I soon became acquainted with them. They were Lieutenant Benjamin Rigg, of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, and John Reinartz, famous short wave radio expert; our hydrographer and radio operator, respectively, both fine fellows, and we made a congenial crowd at the inn that evening. We four were the first ones to arrive, with the exception of the mate, the cook and the engineer. John Jaynes, the engineer, was another very fine fellow, and we all liked John, as we soon came to call him. In a few days we were all calling each other by our first names and felt as if we had known each other all our lives. John certainly could make an engine behave when it didn't want to, and he also could render valuable aid and advice on nearly everything.

The cook had gone home for a couple of days to wind up his affairs, and he did not return until the day following. The mate, "Robbie," as we soon called him, was a real mate. His job was to get things done in a hurry, and he did it. But in addition to his capability as a mate, he was a real fellow, and no one had more of the respect and friendship of the expedition than Robbie. The Commander was still in Boston supervising the preparation of the *Peary*, the ship that was to carry the naval airplanes and aviators. He was not scheduled to arrive in Wiscasset till Wednesday night; so we had several days before his arrival. The rest of the personnel were coming up with the *Peary* from Boston.



Photo Brust.

The *Bowdoin* and her crew, Wiscasset, Maine, June 20, 1925.

Left to right: John Jaynes, Engineer; Commander Donald B. MacMillan; Ralph P. Robinson, Mate; Kennett L. Rawson, Cabin Boy; John Reinartz, short wave radio expert; Martin Vorce, Cook; Lieutenant Benjamin Rigg, U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey; Onnig D. Melkon, moving picture photographer.

After a pleasant evening and a good sleep at the local inn, the sleeping accommodations on the vessel not yet being arranged, Dick and I repaired to the *Bowdoin* early the next morning. My illusions about life on the bounding billow had undergone a change since I had seen scientists acting as stevedores. But it was still somewhat of a surprise when the mate ordered Dick and me to go ashore and sort and remove the sprouts from thirty bushels of potatoes that were lying in a neighboring storehouse. We spread the potatoes on the dock under a broiling sun and set to work. How good an iceberg would have looked at that moment! Some ten bushels and five

blisters later, as I attempted to straighten up to see if my back had assumed a permanent wave, the thought struck me that Gareth scrubbing pots in King Arthur's kitchen had nothing on me except that he gained immortality while I was getting an awful pain in the back. But the joke was on him; he had no Arctic expedition as a reward for his pains. At last, however, the potatoes were divorced from their sprouts and carefully resacked. We both decided that our shipmates should never know how much unbargained-for sweat they were consuming with their tubers. The mate, who later appeared, seemed to be satisfied with our labors, and this fact greatly reassured me. Thus, as the old ship's log might read: "This day came in with bliss and worked around into blisters. So ends this day." This, with the exception of a very pleasant dance which the delightfully hospitable Sewalls gave that evening. Bliss again!

CHAPTER II

UNDER WEIGH

THE next day was to be a very interesting one. In the first place the Commander was coming in the evening, and secondly the cook was arriving. The time-honored tradition on shipboard is that next in importance to the captain comes the cook. My stomach was in full accord with this theory, and I was anxious to see the arbiter of its destiny. As soon as I got to know him I knew my trust had not been misplaced. Martin Vorce was the best cook and had the finest disposition I ever saw wrapped up in human form. There is no theory either about the cook's having the hardest work on the ship; it is straight fact. Mart was always on the job, "blow high, blow low." He had several bouts with refractory dishes in rough weather, but he always came out on top.

After the excitement incident to his arrival had died down, we were aware of the approach of a vessel. At first we thought it was the *Peary*, but as she was not due till the next day we decided it could not be she. In a short time we saw that it was a navy tug loaded to the gunwales with gasoline. She drew alongside the dock and began discharging her cargo. First a mound of gasoline cases that seemed as big as the great pyramid of Cheops was hoisted out; this was followed by a fleet of barrels, and to cap the climax three Liberty engines made their appearance. I thought if all that was stowed aboard the *Bowdoin* there would be no room for the rest of us. But beyond doubt, enough of those cases would go aboard to keep me on the move for some time. My prophecy was true. The remainder of that day and all the next I walked back and forth across a narrow plank accompanied by the inevitable case. Sometimes the case and I teetered dangerously near the edge; at others we made an uneventful voyage. I almost hoped I might slip, for in my reeking condition I felt a good swim would have been worth ten years of my life. But I avoided this longed for disgrace through gyrations worthy of a gymnast, and while there was no crowd to cheer me on, I had the satisfaction of seeing the mound slowly diminish.

After work was over for the day I became painfully aware that loading gasoline had discovered a number of tender muscles of which school athletics had never made me aware. But this condition did not prevent my looking forward with zest to a dance that was to be given in honor of the High School Graduation. This was to be held that evening, and the outstanding feature of the graduation was that the graduates were to receive their diplomas from the hand of the Commander, who had especially cut short his stay in Boston in order to be present.

With the big event of the evening in mind, we went below and holy-stoned our gasoline-soaked hides religiously. Then we turned to and attacked our first meal on shipboard, and we vowed that if all the other meals were as good, we should never have cause to complain.

After we had waded through our food, we started for the High School. A short walk landed us there, and we nosed our way through the mob gathered about the entrance. As we entered, the exercises were just beginning, and the Commander was on the point of entering into his presentation speech. We listened to his speech and the ones following with interest mingled with impatience. Finally the graduates were graduated, and the dance was on. Then came our long awaited opportunity to meet the Commander. The mate led us over and presented us. I had never before seen the Commander, but I had heard enough about him to whet my curiosity to a degree where I wanted to know the man from the myth. From the moment I met him I knew that I was serving under a Commander who was a real leader and a man among men. This impression has never left me, but has since been constantly strengthened.

After we had chatted together for a few minutes, with characteristic good humor, the Commander told the mate to see that we met all of the sweet young things and had plenty of dancing, for it would be some time before we danced again. We accepted the Commander's suggestion as a sacred duty, and obeyed it to the letter.

"The morning after the night before" was rather a painful period, as dancing until the midnight oil is low and then arising at the crack of dawn does not incline one to rhapsodize over the sunrise. But that morning, without the aid of our usual battery of alarm clocks, we were awakened by the shrill blast of a steamer's siren. We all tumbled into our clothes as fast as our sleep-

numbed bodies could make the grade. The first person on deck yelled, "Here comes the *Peary*!" True enough, in another moment we could make out the white lettering against the black bow. We gave a lusty cheer as she sidled up to the dock, and then stood by to make fast her lines. In a few moments she was safely moored, and we were swarming aboard to examine our companion of the long cruise.

The first objects to attract our attention were the three navy airplanes on the after deck. On these three canvas-swathed forms hung all our hopes. If they failed, it would mean sure death for their intrepid occupants. In their undress condition they did not look very imposing, but in my imagination I already heard the roar of the mighty engines tuning up in the lee of some sheltering icepan. I visioned the flash of the white foam as they skimmed along for the take-off, and I saw them recede into the western sky with an ever-diminishing whirr of engines, outward bound on those flights from which we hoped so much. Again I saw these proud argosies of the air, this time returning triumphant with the secret of the ages disclosed. However, the cook's sudden cry for breakfast, mingled with the savory odors of bacon and coffee effectually dissipated all this sort of dreaming.

After breakfast we got acquainted with our shipmates on board the *Peary*. There were eight naval aviators under the leadership of Commander Richard E. Byrd, who has since distinguished himself in his daring flight over the Polar Sea, and there were also several scientists and photographers. The ship was under the general direction of Commander E. F. McDonald, who was second in command of the expedition and in charge of radio communication. Captain George Steele was master of the ship and in direct charge of the navigating and safety of the vessel.

At this time arrived the remaining members of the *Bowdoin's* crew, namely, Maynard Owen Williams, author and photographer, known to many by his fine articles and pictures in the *National Geographic Magazine*; and Onnig D. Melkon, motion picture expert, whose job was to preserve a motion picture record of the expedition for later use in the Commander's lectures. These two completed the ship's crew, and now with our full complement we were counting the minutes till sailing time.

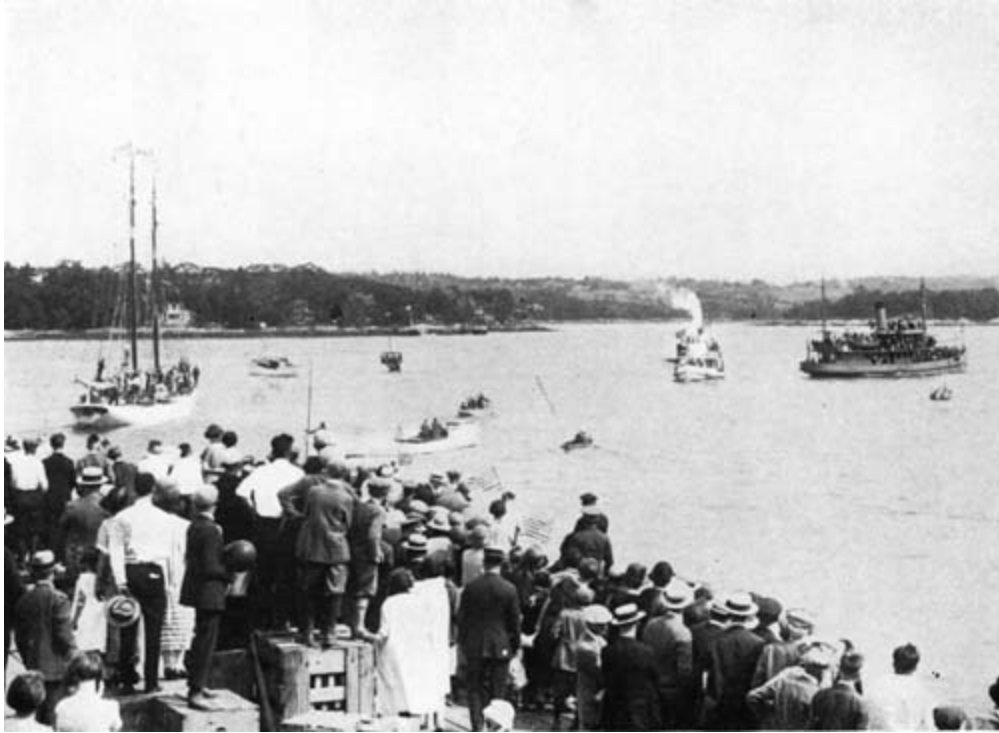
At last the great day came. The departure was an event of national importance. Town, state and nation were all officially represented. In

addition to these were thousands of interested citizens and visitors come to wish us bon voyage. Among the latter were most of the families of the crew, including my own. Two o'clock was the zero hour, and after short exercises at the town hall, the Commander came aboard and gave the long awaited order: "Cast off."



Photo Geo. W. Lord.

Outward bound, June, 1925.



The *Bowdoin* leaving the dock at Wiscasset.

Eager hands freed the lines and amid the roar of steam whistles and cheers from the crowd we slowly headed seaward. Governor Brewster of Maine had furnished a band and a tug to transport them, and as we steamed outward they poured forth a brazen blare of melody. Alumni and students of Bowdoin College, the Commander's alma mater, had chartered a steamer, and the enthusiastic, leather-lunged collegians raked us fore and aft with a series of vocal salvos that would have driven any team on to victory. The procession was headed by two naval vessels especially designated by the Navy Department to do honor to the occasion. In addition to this official recognition, a large number of yachts from far and near had gathered to join in the celebration. But as we reeled off the miles, our escorts gradually turned back one by one, until by the time we neared the open sea, only a persistent few remained. Even these had returned by the time we were fairly launched forth on the long ocean roll, and the *Peary*, too, had deserted us, as she was going to Boothbay to take on a final supply of water, while we set our course in solitary state for Monhegan Island. Just as the great lighthouse began to blink, we dropped anchor under the lee of the island. Here the guests who had thus far accompanied us, soon followed the anchor over the side and went up to the village inn where we shortly joined them.

There, in accordance with custom, the hospitable islanders had prepared a delicious banquet for the members of the expedition and their guests. There we ate well indeed but not too wisely for mariners who were about to slip their cable in the morning.

CHAPTER III

IN THE LAND OF ADVENTURE

AT noon the next day, Sunday, June 21st, we put to sea from the last outpost of the United States that we should see until our return. As we circled the islands, a fishing boat filled with enthusiastic members of the Civitan Club, who had come all the way from Minneapolis to see us off, came alongside and throwing huge codfish aboard shouted the last farewells we heard in home waters from fellow citizens.

In a few moments a Bay of Fundy fog had swallowed us up, and the curtain had dropped on the last home setting. The day was fairly calm, but there was a long, oily swell which rolled the boat like a lazy pendulum. Moreover, the smoke from the exhaust was carried forward across the deck by a light, following breeze. In a few hours I began to notice a greenish pallor overspreading the faces of my shipmates, and, guided by my own feelings amidships, I had an intuition that my face was experiencing the same change. Soon a disheveled figure sprang from the forecabin companionway and made a dash for the rail. In a few moments another appeared bound for the same destination. I thought this was very funny, when suddenly the ship fetched a great roll, and I meditated with melancholy on my liberal indulgence at the dinner of the night before. Without stopping for further speculations I too joined in the mad scramble for the rail. Under the suasion of an unstable equilibrium the gastric organs have certain generous periods when they won't keep a thing, and when they are in this mood they follow the example of time and tide and wait for no man. This lack of a sense of expediency on the part of these unfortunate organs caused several similar embarrassing situations from time to time. After completing my first session at the rail, I felt relieved—much relieved, and decided I was all through with such foolishness; so I sat down to await my trick at the wheel and to enjoy the adventures in *mal de mer* of the other unfortunates. But again my mirth ended in another dash for the rail. These upsets, however, did not permit of any laying off from regular duties, since the work had to be done and there were none too many of us to do it. Thus I

stood my regular trick at the wheel, a task with which I was familiar from previous voyages, kept my regular watch and did whatever duties were assigned me despite a few protests on the part of my stomach. This state of affairs continued for the next three days until we reached Sydney, Nova Scotia.

Early on the morning of the second day out we rounded Cape Sable, the southernmost point in Nova Scotia, and laid a northerly course parallel to the coast heading for Cape Breton Island where Sydney is located. Here we were to take on water and fuel oil before squaring away for "The Labrador."

Three days later on Wednesday morning, we reached Cape Breton Island and made our way into the spacious harbor of Sydney. The *Peary*, having preceded us, was lying at North Sydney loading coal and placing iron plates over the lower portholes, that they might not be broken by the ice.

We made our way to a supply dock in the lower end of Sydney harbor and began loading fuel and other supplies. Inasmuch as Sydney was the most outlying stop on our journey to offer tonsorial and other luxurious civilized conveniences, we availed ourselves of all the facilities that the town afforded. For awhile the barber shop was the center of interest, with the soda counter at the drug store running a close second. It was while we were in a drug store that an unprecedented thing happened. Mr. Raycroft, a friend of the Commander's, who had accompanied us up to Sydney, entered the store, started to make a purchase, when suddenly he bolted into the street without a word of explanation. In a few moments he returned looking a few shades paler, and in reply to our anxious queries he told us that the unaccustomed steadiness of the building had made him feel sick, and he felt an urgent need of fresh air. That was the only case of "land sickness" in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

After a voyage of general exploration about the town, we discovered the product for which Sydney is famous, and that is lobsters. Under the leadership of Ben Rigg, an ardent enthusiast on the subject of shellfish, we raided every lobster joint in town. One may easily imagine after our hollow days at sea that there was plenty of room for food. After visiting about five places and exhausting their limited supplies, we ended up about eleven o'clock in a Chinaman's, where we gorged on more of these luscious crustaceans and on chop suey. None of us had nightmare, strange to say.

After three days of the strenuous life in Sydney, our preparations were complete, and we pulled out for the bleak and desolate Labrador, leaving instructions with the *Peary* to join us at Battle Harbor after completing her coaling.

We set sail for the Labrador with a feeling that we were at last entering the great unknown. From what we had heard and read concerning this region, none of us knew what to expect. But we had the best possible person on board to enlighten us; namely, Doctor Wilfred Grenfell, the famous Labrador missionary doctor. He was just returning from a trip around the world and had arrived in Sydney preparatory to going on to Battle Harbor. Being acquainted with the Commander, he came down, and as the Doctor was planning to leave on the next steamer, the Commander invited him to accompany us instead. In addition to Doctor Grenfell we were accompanied by another distinguished guest, Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, President of the National Geographic Society, under whose auspices we sailed. Having voyaged with us to Sydney, he was so charmed with the life aboard ship that he continued with us to Battle Harbor. Thus we were well equipped with celebrities, come what might.



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**Rawson, MacMillan at the wheel, and Dr. Grosvenor.
On way to Sydney.**



“Yonder beneath the North Star lies our destination, Lad.”



**Commander MacMillan, Dr. Grosvenor and Dr. Grenfell.
Battle Harbor.**

After sailing for several days through the placid waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, we found ourselves at the entrance of the Straits of Belle Isle. Here we realized for the first time that we were really getting north, when the word was passed around to look out for bergs. I had heard much of the danger of icebergs, and an apprehensive shudder spread over my frame as I imagined what would happen if we should run on one unawares, for we were shrouded in one of the usual Straits fogs. In a short while our straining eyes discerned a dark object loom out of the fog on the starboard bow. At the time, I was at the wheel, and Dick Salmon was on the lookout. I gripped the spokes at the thought of how close this chill apparition was, but we were well to port, and in a few moments it melted into the mist.

A short time later after the excitement fomented by the berg had subsided, we began to notice signs of the proximity of land. Robbie clambered aloft into the crow's nest to watch for shoal water, and the rest of us clustered into the bow for the same purpose. Suddenly out of the fog appeared a white line. It was breakers rolling across a long point. A hasty chorus of shouts to the helmsman resulted in an immediate altering of the course to parallel the land, instead of heading straight at it as we were when we first sighted it. It was in this dramatic manner that we made our acquaintance with The Labrador, and it was in a setting typical of this rugged country. One usually becomes acquainted with The Labrador by nearly running on it every time one approaches it during the early summer months, for at that time the land is almost perpetually shrouded in fog. Not long afterwards another line of breakers indicated the presence of a new exponent of terra firma. This disturber of the mariners' peace was named Blanc Sablon, a reminder of the old days of the French domination. This entire south coast is sprinkled with French names and with French speaking people.

As the fog was still too thick for safe navigating along this treacherous coast, we put into the little settlement of Forteau. This is one of Doctor Grenfell's stations, and he made us very welcome there. He also recommended the splendid trout fishing and issued us honorary fishing licenses for the neighboring creeks, since he was an honorary magistrate. Armed with this legal protection and also with rods and gear, we sallied forth to a likely looking brook to try conclusions with the wily denizens of the stream. It certainly seemed good to get our sea legs straightened out as we strolled up and down whipping the stream. After a few casts I felt a

sudden tightening on my line, and the reel began to sing. For a minute I let it run; then I checked it abruptly in order to drive the hook well home. Then the fight was on. The fish threshed wildly in a vain endeavor to free himself, but I had him fast. There was about five minutes of play, and then I reeled him in. He was a fine specimen, weighing very nearly two pounds, and my hopes were high that we might obtain enough for all hands. In a moment I heard a yell from Mart, and looking in his direction I saw that he was holding aloft a trout fully as large as my own. Then we went at it with all our might, but the God of Fortune smiled no further, and at last tired and discomfited, we returned to the ship.

Early the next morning we were under weigh again for Battle Harbor. On our way out as we rounded Cape Point Amour we sighted what seemed to be a great cruiser sailing close to the Cape. As we drew nearer we saw that she was too far in for a large ship, and still closer inspection showed that she was hard and fast on the rocks. We then learned from the Commander that this was the British cruiser *Raleigh* which had run aground in a fog some years previous while endeavoring to make Forteau. We felt a twinge of pity that such a fine ship should rust out her heart on the bleak rocks of Labrador.

Continuing on up the coast, sometimes in fog and sometimes in beautiful clear weather, we were encompassed by a magnificent vista. On one hand the bleak and rugged hills of the shore-line, and on the seaward side a matchless panorama of schooners, dancing waves and icebergs. The schooners tacking in and out under full sail among the glistening bergs; the tall, majestic spires and turrets of the larger bergs dwarfing the tallest mast into insignificance; the dancing wavelets curtsying to the graceful schooners whose black hulls contrasted sharply against the whiteness and marvellous shades of ultramarine blue of the glacial ice, all combined to make an unforgettable picture.

Just as the shadows of evening had begun to creep up from the west and merge the glories of a perfect day into a matchless sunset, the rugged outline of Battle Island appeared bathed in a purple glow that made the hard unyielding rock look like rich dyed velvet. It was not long before we dropped anchor between the sheer rock walls of Battle Harbor.

CHAPTER IV

A TRULY GLORIOUS FOURTH AND SOME VERY REAL FISHING

DR. GRENFELL'S staff were down at the dock to welcome us, and they soon made us realize that American hospitality is the same the world around. Although Labrador is English territory, the hospital is manned and, to improvise an expression, "womanned" by Americans. A doctor, three nurses and three college men, all of whom had volunteered to serve for the summer, made up the staff of the hospital. In every way possible they strove to make our stay in Battle Harbor an enjoyable one, and they certainly succeeded.

While in this port we celebrated the glorious Fourth of July. The day previous we had remembered with a start that the following day was the Fourth! Dick Salmon suggested that we inaugurate the festivities with a snowball fight, since there was a large deposit on the opposite side of the tickle, so-called by the Newfoundlanders in speaking of a narrow channel which indicates ticklish navigating. Dick's cool suggestion did not meet with a warm reception for obvious reasons, and we turned in with our plans for the observance of the day somewhat nebulous.

The next morning at an early hour I was awakened from a sound sleep by the explosion of a firecracker uncomfortably close to my ear. I made a nose dive for the floor muttering imprecations against the authors of the outrage. Then realizing that the great day had come, I hurriedly dressed and made my way to the deck where the celebrants greeted me with such a penitent air that I did not engage in the retaliations I had determined to employ.

After clearing away the breakfast wreckage, the cook began making the pots fly in a business-like manner, and soon savory odors ascending from the galleys gave notice that a culinary masterpiece was in the process of preparation. To the accompaniment of these welcome sounds and odors, we swabbed down the deck and coiled down the lines with despatch, and then sat back in the crisp sunlight in languid anticipation of the approaching

feast. At twelve-thirty the cook's warcry resounded through the vessel, and we tumbled down the companionway to make the first table. Since there was not room for us all at one sitting, our meals were served in two shifts. As "first come, first served" was the order of the day, the competition was keen indeed for the coveted places. I was fortunate enough to slide into the last remaining seat much to the disgust of Melkon who had been keeping his eye on the food all morning. Then came on the grub, and what grub it was! Fish chowder flavored with onions, a magnificent roast of beef—the last domestic meat we were to taste until our return—a profusion of vegetables, plum duff and candy, with coffee and fruit punch to wash it all down. Then there were cigars for those who desired them; a pleasure in which several of us did not indulge.

After this repast we repaired to the deck where we basked in the mellow sunlight like a herd of well-fed walrus. At last one of our more ambitious shipmates suggested that we have an outboard motor race with a boat from the *Peary*. This suggestion was hailed with acclaim, and we immediately set to work tuning up our engine. At this moment arrived Chief Aerographer Francis in the *Peary's* cutter. Immediately we hurled at him our challenge which he at once accepted and it was not long before both boats were at the line ready for the starting gun. Our interest was keen, and suggestions and advice poured over our bulwarks like a Bay of Fundy tide. Soon they were off neck and neck. For a time all progressed beautifully. Then the regular cadence of our boat's exhaust became faltering. The *Peary's* craft forged ahead. We yelled like mad as our crew of two desperately spun the needle valve, and tinkered with every other gadget on the craft. But to no avail. Off went our opponent and with him our hopes of victory. When he crossed the finish line, our crew was still wrestling with the refractory engine, and we reluctantly presented Francis with the first prize, a leaky rubber boot. He hove the boot at our heads and went off in high dudgeon over our lack of appreciation of his superior prowess.

All along the Commander had held forth on the delicacy of the Labrador trout and salmon, and therefore great was our delight when one day the mission people proposed a trip to the head of St. Louis Bay, where was located a fine trout stream not far from the winter hospital. It is necessary to maintain a winter station in addition to the summer station at Battle Harbor, as the outer islands are untenable in winter owing to their exposed position.

The heavy pack ice comes in from the sea, and savage winter gales lash the bleak and desolate islands, rendering them impracticable for winter habitation. Every one moves inland to the head of the great bays and settles down in a well sheltered log cabin in close proximity to a forest of good firewood. The hospital is no exception to this rule, and by the time the last schooner has winged its way southward, the Battle Harbor station is closed, and the winter hospital is put into service. We were all very anxious to see the back country and looked forward to the trip with keen expectancy, whetted by what we had heard from the Commander.

Early the next day with the Commander's permission, all hands, with the exception of one or two who unfortunately had to keep the ship, gaily sallied forth in the capacious mission boat. After traversing a space of rough water, which caused embarrassment to several of the ladies, hospital nurses who accompanied us, we entered the great bay and sailed past shores at first barren of vegetation but growing progressively greener as we penetrated inland. It was interesting to observe this increase in plant life as we drew away from the blighting influence of the frigid Labrador current, which makes this coast the bleak and barren land it is.

We arrived at the winter station a short time before noon and gave it a thorough inspection. It seemed so nice and cosy tucked away in the midst of a beautiful grove of pines on a picturesque arm of the bay, that I almost wished I was a patient there.

As the sun mounted higher and higher towards the zenith, I began to wonder where lunch fitted into the program. This also seemed to be in the minds of our hosts and Doctor Grenfell soon suggested that we have lunch on the banks of St. Mary's Creek and do our fishing afterwards. The lunch was to be cooked "on location," as they say in the movies, and the *pièce de résistance* was to be a real old New England fish chowder. To one who has never experienced a fish chowder—for it is an experience—words are inadequate to describe it; and to one who has experienced it any attempt at description is superfluous. Suffice it to say we gorged ourselves to repletion.

Even this heavy cargo of chowder did not hinder our getting under weigh for the trout basin, and we were soon off with rod and gear. Williams, however, who looked down on fishing with sophisticated contempt,

remained behind to amuse the ladies. As we moved off we last saw him feverishly tossing dishes aloft, and only on our return did we learn much to our relief that his brain had not been affected by the heavy meal and that he was merely giving an exhibition of Bagdad juggling.

A short distance up the stream we found a small series of rapids between which were dark, enticing pools. Mart, our mentor in such matters, declared the location favorable, and we were soon casting our flies into the swirling eddies. Every now and then we could see the silver flash of a fish break the white water of the rapids, but for a considerable time no welcome tug at the line ensued. We were on the point of moving farther upstream when suddenly I felt a violent jerk, my reel sang and my rod assumed an excessive arc. I stood my ground and watched the line pay out until I could see the nickel core of the reel. I was on the point of dashing into the stream to relieve the danger of having the line unreeve, when slowly the rod came straight and the reel ceased to revolve. One of father's old fishing axioms came to me: "A slack line spells disaster." I began reeling furiously, and for a minute I felt that my fish was off. I was on the point of giving up when again came a taut jerk. Away sped the fish with another thirty feet of my line. I played him with all the cunning I could command, until at last his silver scales sparkled in the shallow pool at my feet. Just as I was about to draw him to shore, he flipped his tail and was gone again. Once more I gave him his head. This time he dashed towards a jagged clump of rocks, and I realized with dismay that unless I took extreme measures I should soon have my line inextricably tangled around the rocks. Taking a desperate chance I added a few more pounds tension to the reel. The rod bent dangerously, and my breath came hard with the suspense, but the rod held. He came short of the rocks by several inches; then, exhausted by this desperate sally, he slackened his efforts, and I began to reel him in. This time the struggle was short, and in a few minutes he was gasping on the rocks at my feet, as fine a specimen of brook trout as I ever saw!

In my excitement I had not noticed that success had crowned the efforts of my companions, and there were three or four other speckled beauties divided among them. For a while longer we fished with signal good fortune, but at last the dipping sun warned us that it was time to think of returning to the ship. Gathering up our trophies we hastened down to the shore where

we rejoined the others, and in a short time we were chugging along towards the ship, at the close of one of the finest days we ever had in Labrador.

CHAPTER V

THROUGH THE PACK TO DISASTER

IT was with regret that at dawn on the day following we bade farewell to Battle Harbor and the hospitable Grenfell workers and squared away for Hopedale whence we would make the long leg to Greenland. While on the way to Hopedale we crossed the mouth of Hamilton Inlet, a great fiord or arm of the sea that penetrates the land for a hundred miles. From this fiord extends a river containing one of the largest waterfalls in the world, the Grand Falls of the Hamilton River.

Early the next morning we were off Cape Harrison at the northern end of the inlet. Here we began to notice scattered cakes of ice drifting out to sea—"Gone abroad," as the Newfoundlanders say. Soon the scattered fragments became thicker, and a full-fledged field of pack ice presented itself to our vision.

The Commander ascended to the crow's nest to survey the situation and con the ship through the ice. As this pack barred the entrance to Hopedale it was necessary to go through it, and the Commander seeing a likely lead—a lane of open water between the ice cakes—ordered the wheel put hard aport. The vessel rapidly swung around until her bow was directed down the lead. "Steady!" was the next command from aloft, and the helmsman spun the wheel in the opposite direction as hard as he could until she checked in her swing. She rapidly traversed the lead which soon terminated in a solid cake of ice. Straight on continued the *Bowdoin* like a hunter for a jump. Soon her rounded bow was almost in contact with the ice, and in another second she had struck it fair and square. Her prow leaped up on the pan, and I leaned over the prow thinking that surely she would never be able to force her way through such a large cake of ice. But driven by her powerful engine, her bow glided straight up. Then she slowly came to a halt with her bow well up on the ice. With breathless interest we watched to see whether she had the weight to crush it. Just as we were preparing to back out and hit it again, a thin line of black broke the even white. She had made it! The great cake was rent asunder by our sturdy little vessel, and she slowly gained way until

she leaped forward with increasing rapidity at the next obstacle which dared to bar her way. Thus we continued weaving in and out, now to port and now to starboard, wherever a lead opened, and where there was none smashing our way. Good judgment and a knowledge of ice conditions are required in ice navigation on the part of the man aloft, and the helmsman must possess the ability to follow orders rapidly and efficiently and be able to keep the ship from brushing the sides of narrow passages. Spinning that wheel frequently and for all one is worth is no joke, and even in that cold, stripped down to my underwear, I sweated like a pack mule before I had been at it for long.

All day we ploughed through the pack with the *Peary* near by. She was under a disadvantage in having a straight bow and in not maneuvering as readily as we did, but her superior engine power in a large measure compensated for this. As darkness slowly fell I was struck by the absence of any friendly light twinkling a welcome through the dusk, such as one sees in friendlier climes. Nothing but rocks, ice, sky and water—not even a tree or fisherman's hut to vary the monotony of those barren cliffs. What a contrast to the ceaseless activity of The Hill with its life and action, its cheering bleachers at the games and its humming classrooms—never a moment there when one feels that sense of utter detachment from one's fellow man which oppressed me in viewing the bleak Labrador. The utter desolation of it all brought thoughts of School and Home with their warmth and life and cheer. Suddenly I found myself shivering violently, and with a start I returned to the immediate present. Turning away from the fading landscape I hastened to the companionship of my mates in the warm, well-lighted forecastle.

The following morning we were away early and were soon clear of the last of the ice and were bound up Flagstaff Tickle on the way to Hopedale, the southernmost settlement of the Eskimos. Despite the fact that these waters are poorly charted, we experienced no difficulty in keeping the channel until we were almost in Hopedale. Then out of a clear sky, grim disaster descended upon us. We were skirting a small reef which jutted a considerable way into the Sound when suddenly the bow of the *Peary* made an abrupt ascent; then she slowly assumed a list. Immediately the Commander ordered the *Bowdoin's* helm put hard down. In a moment more we were flying down wind to the aid of our stricken companion. She had

struck on a sunken ledge of rock which gave no indication of its presence until the vessel's keel had touched. At once we came alongside, which our comparatively shallow draft rendered safe, and after rigging a masthead line we steamed slowly away to see if we could pull her off. Calm and cool as always, Captain Steele ordered the lowering of a small boat in order to run out a kedge anchor.

Meanwhile we ran out the slack in the line and gradually took up a strain. But owing to a strong wind assisting the efforts of our engine, no sooner had the line come taut than it snapped. Captain Steele was now manfully striving to work his boat to windward. Seeing his plight we steamed over to give the lifeboat a tow. In a few moments we had it in the proper position, and let go the anchor. Then we ran down and placed a line over the *Peary's* stern to try to haul her off in that manner. During this time the lifeboat had returned and was hauled up on a short bight astern while her crew disembarked. In the stern of the small boat stood Commander McDonald awaiting his turn to get aboard the *Peary*. In some unaccountable manner the lifeboat caught under the counter of the ship, and a sea suddenly jammed her against the plates. As she could rise no farther, the waves poured over her gunwales and swamped her. McDonald shouted to those on deck to drop the boat aft, but she had become so waterlogged that they could do nothing with her, and each succeeding wave forced her farther and farther down. All yelled for him to jump while the jumping was good, but he still maintained his position in a manner reminiscent of the boy who stood on the burning deck. In spite of the Commander's heroic pose, the boat gradually sank, and in a second more it began to roll over. With one wild leap he left his sinking craft to its fate, caught a hold on the bulwarks and was pulled aboard the *Peary*.

In the meantime, the deck of the *Peary* became a scene of wild excitement. Everyone stood around on the deck with their bags packed, apparently convinced that the boat was going down. But their fears were vain. Under the combined influence of a rising tide, our pulling and the kedge anchor, she began slowly to slide off the ledge, and in a few moments she was once more safe afloat.

We then went in search of the submerged lifeboat which had slowly drifted away during the intervening time. We soon came upon her drifting bottom upwards. To rescue the boat was somewhat of a problem, since there was

nothing visible to which we could make fast. By skillful maneuvering, however, Captain MacMillan brought us alongside, and we strove desperately to get a line on her. But the winds and the waves unfortunately separated us, and we had the whole operation to do over again. The next time we approached her a sudden gust of wind swerved our bow just enough to hit her a crashing blow, seriously damaging her.

That misfortune, however, was not the worst that befell us that afternoon, for, as we strove to clear the boat, our propeller struck one of her spare fittings thereby stripping her internal gears. At the time we were unaware of the damage, and the propellor continued turning, seemingly uninjured. We at last managed to corral the unruly lifeboat and then set our course for Hopedale. It had been a harrowing afternoon, but all in all we had much to be thankful for. Our misfortunes were nothing compared to what they would have been if the tide had been falling, and the *Peary* had been unable to float off. For being a steel ship, she would have filled and become a total loss when the tide began to flow.

CHAPTER VI

THE HEROES OF HOPEDALE

HOPEDALE, with the exception of Makkovik, which harbors only two families, is the southernmost settlement of the Eskimos and one of the principal posts of the Moravian missions. Unknown to the world at large, the Moravians have been carrying on a wonderful missionary work on this desolate coast and great have been their services. In the first place they have formed the one barrier between the primitive Eskimo and the ruin which has been the inevitable accompaniment of contact with the white race. Had it not been for these good Samaritans there would not be a single Eskimo in Labrador to-day! For when all the rest of the people who have dealings with the natives have striven to encourage their destruction, these brave missionaries, and they alone, have held firm for the right, have waged a never-ceasing fight against all who threatened the welfare of their wards. No obstacle has proved too great; no effort has been too tiring; not even a lack of funds has deterred these indomitable evangelists from doing their duty where they found it. They have converted the Eskimos to Christianity and endowed them with the priceless gift of the true Christian spirit of brotherly love. Aside from their religious work, they are the only agency for carrying on education in Northern Labrador, both among Eskimos and whites. Owing to their untiring efforts the Eskimos have been uplifted from a state of complete ignorance and savagery to a status of civilization and education.

At their Makkovik station the Moravians maintain a boarding school for boys, up there education being considered the heritage of the male alone. At this school the children are given board and lodging and as much education as their untrained minds can assimilate. This board, lodging and education they receive for fifty cents a week! Yet such is the poverty of these people that most of the families find it well-nigh impossible to pay even this modest sum.

The school consisted of one bare classroom furnished with a few rough desks and chairs, while across the hall a room comprised the dormitory. I

could not help comparing it to the elaborately equipped plant which I had so recently left. At this primitive school there were no spacious athletic fields, no huge, airy dormitories, no stately towers, no gymnasium of any description. We, in this country, can hardly conceive of a crack school, for that is what this one is considered, not having at least a gymnasium. The children came to learn and for no other reason. There were no dances, no gay parties or entertainments and no competitive sports—in short, education was reduced to terms of severest simplicity. None the less it is, I dare say, more appreciated and more highly respected than it is in many other places.

The fearless regard of these missionaries for justice and impartiality has been the shield and buckler of the simple aborigine against the unscrupulous avarice of the trader and the demoralizing influence of the depraved white. Much also have they done for the poverty-stricken white settler, educating the children, bringing relief to the bereaved, and keeping alive in the breasts of all the spirit of honesty and idealism. In addition to their care for the things of the spirit, they were the first to introduce medical aid to The Labrador. Truly have they carried out in the broadest sense the words of the Master when he said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature.”

What a glorious epic of Christian service has been their ministry on this coast! Clear and strong as to the apostles of old came the call of duty—that inspiring lodestone which has drawn forth the noblest and best from the men of all ages. Home and kindred, material rewards, ease and luxury were as naught before it. The stern dictates of conscience to them comprised the sole path to joy and happiness. But how little we realize the trials and deprivations that their self-imposed exile necessitates; how many of the little things that to us seem so necessary they must perforce do without. A prized possession of one of the missionaries was an old camera dating back to 1870. This he displayed with great pride one afternoon while we were taking tea at the mission. It consisted of a cumbersome old box on a tripod, of which the only method of regulating the diaphragm opening was by inserting brass plugs with a proper sized hole bored in them. He handled this venerable machine with the affection born of long years of association. While we were examining it, his kindly wife brought forth with pride several bulky albums filled with the results of her husband’s efforts. We

opened these and great was our surprise to see the beautiful quality and real artistry of these pictures. He was an artist to the soul, and with proper equipment what pictures he might have taken!

No one better realized the strict economy under which these people perform must labor, than did the Commander, and it was at his suggestion that the Zenith Radio Corporation, which had supplied us with our radio equipment, donated several receiving sets for distribution among the worthy missionaries. One of these we presented to Mr. Perrit, the minister at Hopedale, and when he heard the music, his gratitude and delight were so touching that we wished we might do infinitely more for him and his cause.

Never a strong sect, the Moravians have made up in zeal and quality of service what they lack in money and numbers. With no prospect of reward from the world, they have carried on year in and year out. Many an opportunity for improvement have they seen slip for lack of funds, but undaunted they have kept their faith and courage in spite of the most disheartening discouragements. When one brother succumbed another was always ready to fill the gap. Their service to humanity cannot be over-rated. Theirs is the true understanding.

But it seems that their long ministry soon may end. Never a strong sect, in the last few years they have suffered from many ill-advised attacks. During the war many of them were interned by the Newfoundland government, and their bishop was deported—acts not unlike those earlier perpetrated against the simple Acadian farmers. The great fur-trading companies have been making every effort to crowd them out. Last year unfortunately they were obliged to abandon their northernmost station to the Hudson's Bay Company, and it is not unlikely that unless aid is soon forthcoming from some source, their remaining stations will suffer a like fate.

All true friends of Labrador who know of the labors of this noble group will view with regret the passing of this earnest organization which has accomplished so much for these simple children of the north. My strong personal hope is that the necessary funds for the perpetuation of this fine work may be realized. A few thousand dollars will mean worlds of help to them, and when one sees, he realizes the worth-whileness of giving to such a cause as is supported by these apostles of the outposts of civilization.

CHAPTER VII

IN ESKIMO LAND AND IN TROUBLE

NO sooner were we at anchor in Hopedale Harbor than I noticed the approach of several large boats filled with strange-looking, brown folk, different from any I had ever before seen. For a moment I was at a loss to explain them; then suddenly I remembered that we had arrived in Eskimo Land. I stared with interest and surprise. These were not the kind of people I had seen in pictures! These were not the grotesque, fur-swathed barbarians that my mind had conceived. With the exception of dark skin and rather high cheek-bones, they looked not so very different from ourselves, and they lacked that ferocious look I had seen stamped on their countenances in the Sunday supplements. As they came alongside they greeted us with expansive grins and a babble of good-natured banter which displayed their white teeth and black flashing eyes.

“Ochshinai! Taku oomiak-swa!” came from the boats, and I later learned that this meant, “Hello, look at the big ship.”

The Commander came on deck at this juncture and was greeted with an enthusiastic outburst, for his generosity and kindness are remembered by more than one denizen of this isolated land. Immediately he entered into conversation with them, as he is well acquainted with the language. While he was thus engaged, Robbie appeared on deck and took in the situation at one glance. He then descended into the cabin with an inscrutable smile on his face. We did not realize what he was about until he reappeared laden with tobacco and candy. At once he was surrounded by a laughing, chattering mob striving to wheedle from him some of the coveted articles. With a deliberate air, born of long experience at this game, he began distributing these much-desired treasures. To each one he presented one article, and saw that none was slighted or obtained an undue share of the spoils, in spite of many ingenious and good-natured attempts to defraud him. Each attempt was regarded as a sporting proposition, and loud were the laughs among the natives when one of their number was detected trying to “gyp the system.”

Soon Mr. Perrit, the head missionary, arrived and officially welcomed us to Hopedale. Mr. Perrit is a strapping six footer with curly blonde hair—a regular Viking. He is one of the most earnest missionaries on the coast, and none has a greater and more well-deserved popularity than he. He remained aboard for some time, and after his departure we went ashore to consummate the purpose for which we had come to Hopedale—namely, to obtain warm Eskimo clothing for the colder weather to be encountered farther north.

We soon had the storekeeper booked up with orders, and he immediately set the entire female population to work chewing skins. The Eskimo tailor differs considerably from the Broadway type. In the first place it is a she instead of a he, and in lieu of shrinking the material she chews it. Since the material consists of sealskin or other heavy hides, it requires a thorough chewing to render it pliable. After the chewing is completed, she cuts the skin to the proper size and shape by means of an ooloo, or woman's knife—a knife shaped like an old-fashioned chopping knife. Then she takes the material and sews it together with sinew from the back of a deer. This sinew has the useful property of swelling when wet, and once it has been wet, it never again contracts. This swelling completely closes the needle hole and renders the garment water-tight. It is no easy task to wield a needle in this tough hide, but these strong-fingered women turn out a very finished product. The fit may leave something to be desired as the measurements are taken by eye and the garment constructed accordingly, but they are warm and comfortable.

In addition to the clothes, we also laid in a supply of sealskin boots, as the Labrador product is far superior to the Greenland variety. The workmanship is more thorough, and the water-resisting qualities are better. These boots are made of harp seal and are the best things going for Arctic work. With a handful of grass in the sole to form insulation against the cold and to act as a pad against pebbles or sharp ice, they are as comfortable an article of footwear as one can desire.

Another reason for our coming to Hopedale was to secure our old interpreter, Abram Bromfield, who had been with the Commander on numerous previous trips. Abie lived about thirty miles from Hopedale at the head of a large bay known as Jack Lane's Bay. Therefore, after we had obtained our clothing, we set our course for his home. While on the way we

noticed that the vessel was not turning up her customary speed, but as the engine was functioning perfectly we decided that it must have been an illusion created by the effects of tide or wind.

On our arrival at Jack Lane's Bay, the Commander and McDonald took one of the small boats and started up the Bay for Abie's house. Early the next morning they returned accompanied by the whole Bromfield family who brought us several thick, tender, juicy venison steaks and a large mess of fresh-caught trout. Old Sam Bromfield, Abie's father, aged seventy, also brought his accordion and gave us a rare treat by dancing the good old folk dances and playing some of the songs of yesteryear.

The following morning at two o'clock sharp, the mate slid back the forecastle hatch and uttered the familiar cry, "All hands on deck!" In spite of sleep-numbed brains and the well-nigh irresistible desire to return to the alluring arms of Morpheus, we snapped back, "Yes, sir," and hit the deck with despatch.

In getting under weigh my particular job was to stow the chain in the chain locker, and in a few moments my ears were greeted with: "Stand by the chain!" I made a dash over Dick's bunk and dived into the locker just in time to grab the chain as the great electric winch by my ear was beginning its raucous clatter, and the muddy chain was commencing its rapid descent. A few minutes later there lay at my feet a huge mound of rusted links, and I heard the creak of the tackle with which the anchor is brought to the cat-head. The engine-room telegraph jangled; a sudden vibration indicated the throwing in of the clutch, and I prepared to go on deck. Suddenly I noticed the absence of the customary ripple which can be heard from the chain locker when the vessel is under weigh. I listened intently, but no murmur of gurgling water greeted my straining ears. Could the engineer have mistaken the signal? No, the engine was running as usual. I dashed on deck wondering what could be the trouble. The Commander stood by the wheel, on his face a puzzled expression. The rest of the crew were bending over the stern, vainly endeavoring to fathom the trouble.



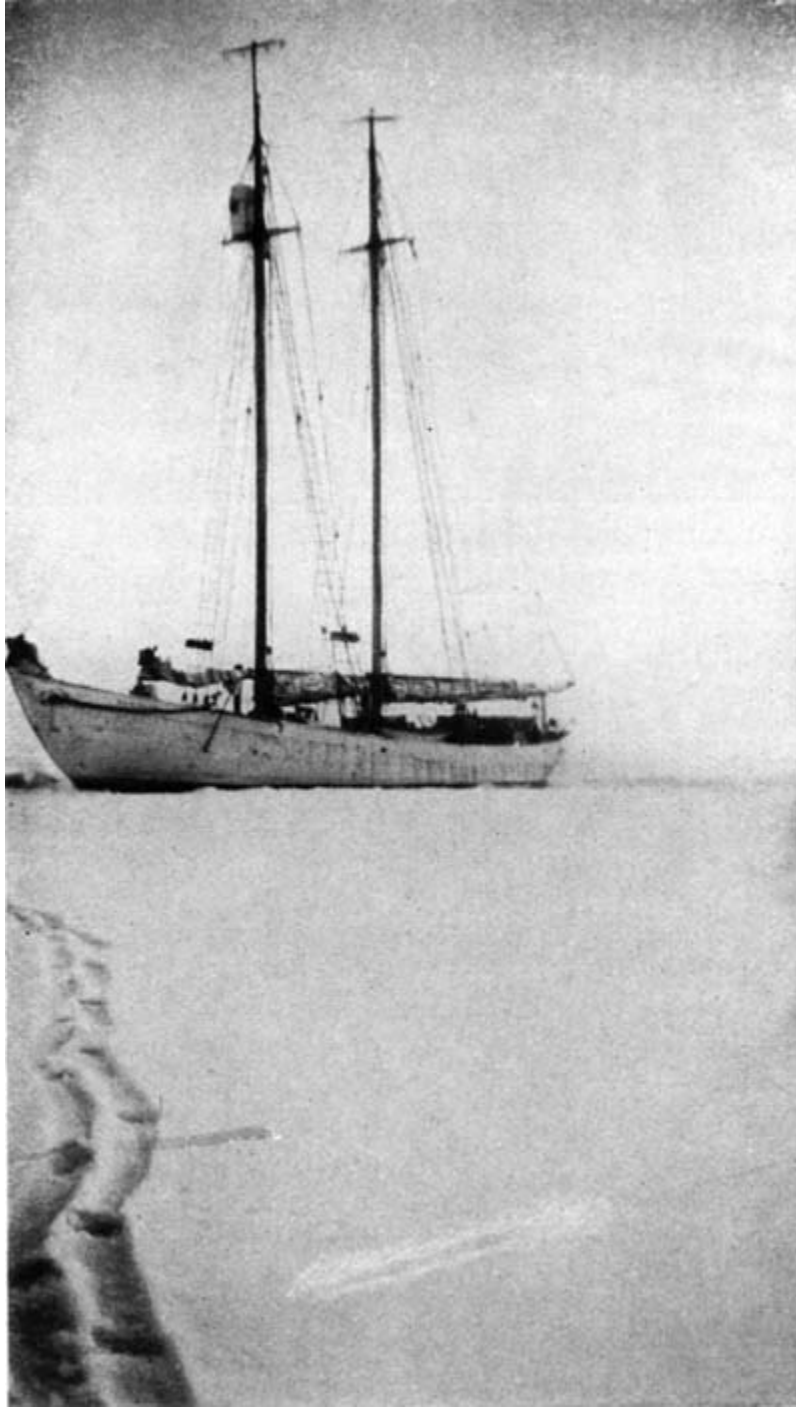
Maynard Williams (left), photographer, National Geographic Society, Lieut. Benjamin Rigg (right), U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

It was still nearly as dark as midnight; just a faint touch of red in the east. In a moment more the *Peary* came sliding along through the morning vapors like a great, grey ghost, her black smoke flickering across the face of the waning moon like a dark forerunner of disaster. Shortly our ears were assailed by a shrill blast from her siren. The Commander realizing that there was something radically wrong with our propulsive apparatus, ordered a boat lowered to take him over to the *Peary* that he might acquaint them with our predicament. In a few moments he had spanned the intervening stretch of water, and we saw the vessel stop as she came down on the boat. The Commander then told Commander McDonald of our trouble and instructed him to continue the voyage to Greenland and await our arrival at Disko Island, where we would rejoin him as soon as our trouble had been adjusted. In the meanwhile we had again let go the anchor to keep the *Bowdoin* from drifting; then we pulled a small boat under the stern for a closer inspection. There the Commander joined us and took part in the investigation. As we had surmised, the propeller was sadly damaged. There was no other recourse but to beach the vessel and change the propeller. With this end in view, the Commander despatched Dick Salmon with one of our motor boats to enlist the aid of the Bromfields and their staunch motor

boat. It was decided that it would be advisable to return to Hopedale where there were better facilities.



The *Bowdoin* passing an iceberg off west coast of Greenland.



The *Bowdoin* caught in a nip, at Melville Bay.

The day being calm, our sails were not of much assistance, and we had to depend in the main on the Bromfield motor boat. How that little motor ever stood the strain is more than I can understand, but stand it she did, and after ten hours of slow progress we limped into Hopedale. There, since the tide was right, we immediately beached the vessel on an adjacent sand-spit and

waited for the low tide to lay bare the propeller. Unfortunately we had arrived at the period of neap or small tides. The rise and fall was so small that the propeller was scarcely more accessible at low tide than at high. Luckily, however, the tides were increasing daily, and in about a week they would enter on the period of spring, or large tides. Therefore, all we could do was to wait philosophically for the much-needed higher water and pull the vessel a little farther in on each high tide.

But this philosophical calm which we had decided to cultivate was not given an opportunity to flourish. Another infliction beset us. We were welcomed back not only by the inhabitants but by a singing, stinging scourge of blood-thirsty mosquitoes. This savage horde had but come to maturity during the past few days, and they descended upon us as did the locusts upon the Egyptians. Before we could stretch mosquito nettings across the hatches, the whole interior of the vessel was infested. We slapped and scratched; sprayed kerosene in all directions; made crude swatters and attacked the noisome pestilence en masse, but all to no avail. In every possible way we strove to devise some means of wholesale annihilation. In the meantime we had stretched netting across all the openings, but this was like locking the stable door after the horse is stolen. We resorted to every conceivable method of extinction and some inconceivable ones, but the insects continued their attacks with unabated ferocity. Nowhere else have I ever encountered such insectivorous persistence. They came from every nook and cranny. But just as we were beginning to despair of discomforting our persecutors, someone had the inspiration of burning plug tobacco. This was an extreme and extravagant measure, dictated by desperation alone, since tobacco was held second only to the safety of the expedition by the devotees of the weed. Regretfully each contributed his quota of tobacco as a burnt offering on the altar of Comfort. In a short time the forecastle was thick with acrid, blue smoke. It was suffocating. But it was efficacious, and soon the inside of the nettings was black with insects struggling for deliverance. We withdrew the nettings, and in a dense swarm they sought safety in flight. Drawing a thick, dizzy breath of relief, we sat on the edges of our bunks and watched the last stragglers disappear. The next problem was to rid the forecastle of smoke, a task almost as difficult as the former problem, but accomplished after much discomfort and effort.

In the midst of the earlier confusion, one wiser than his fellows hit upon what he considered a happy solution of the entire difficulty; to wit, leaving both mosquitoes and smoke in undisputed possession of the forecabin by going aloft and sleeping in the crow's nest. Ten minutes elapsed, when much to our surprise, we heard the rattle of the rigging and muttered imprecations as our intellectual giant returned to our humble company, covered with mosquitoes. Without stopping to answer our jibes, he disappeared where the smoke was thickest.

CHAPTER VIII

GREENLAND!

AFTER enduring a week of insufficient tides and diabolical attacks on the part of the mosquitoes, we at last managed to put in place the new propeller. What a sigh of relief we all gave when the last nut was screwed on and the little *Bowdoin* was once more in trim to continue her voyage. We were at last through with Labrador and Hopedale, and ready to square away for that land of many myths—Greenland.

Once more we wended our way through Windy Tickle and Jack Lane's Bay, where we bade farewell to the Bromfield family. Then with old Sam's fervent blessing still ringing in our ears, we swung our bow seaward while the last rays of the setting sun streamed on ahead as if to guide our wandering footsteps safe across the treacherous North Atlantic to Godhavn—the harbor of God's rest.

For three days we sailed on "through many a fair sea circle" till at last we drew nigh to Greenland. Each day the sun held longer in the sky—in fact, after leaving Labrador, we had no real darkness, though the sun set for a few hours each night. The sea was calm with the exception of a few turbulent hours off Hudson's Straits, when the tidal influence of the bay produced a boisterous chop. The temperature was not very low, and during the long sunny days it was nearly as warm as in many a more favored clime.

On and on we sailed, with nothing to break the vast desolation of the sea, no friendly steamer's smoke, no glistening sail, not even an iceberg—only the great smooth mounds of water which rolled majestically across the surface of the sea to be followed one upon another in unending sequence, until it seemed that we were "alone on a wide, wide sea."

The third day out we began to notice icebergs again. These shining mountains of ice had traveled in the bosom of the Cape Farewell current from their glacial birthplace on the east coast of Greenland around the southernmost point of Greenland and thus far up the west coast, whence

they would swing across Davis Strait and drift down into the North Atlantic in the Labrador current. In this Greenland current also we saw several large trees floating along. These, we learned from the Commander, had drifted across the Polar Sea from Siberia, utilizing the same current by which Nansen strove to drift over the Pole in the *Fram*. In a short while we also observed a considerable lightening of the blue of the sky in the eastern quadrant of the horizon. This was the “iceblink,” a reliable indication of the proximity of ice, which produces a whitish reflection in the sky. Since the whole interior of Greenland is solid ice, there could be no doubt from the direction in which it appeared that it was the iceblink over the great Greenland ice-cap. A consultation with the chart further verified our adjacence to Greenland. In fact, we were not more than sixty miles from the coast, which would put us about a hundred and fifty miles from the ice-cap—a distance easily within the range of visibility of the “blink.” All eyes were straining for the first sight of land, when slowly the horizon began to dissolve, and a white wall of vapor came rolling down upon us. Everything became clammy in the dismal drabness that enveloped us. We should have to maintain unrelaxing vigilance against the menace of icebergs. Moreover, it would prevent our seeing the land until the next day at least, unless it speedily cleared away.

All night we kept a careful watch and came through without a mishap, in spite of the fog’s remaining as thick as burgoo. When the starboard watch, my watch, came on deck at six o’clock the next morning, the fog was beginning to burn off and slowly the visibility increased mile by mile. Suddenly a bit of a breeze ruffled the surface of the sea; the fog curtain suddenly lifted, as in a theatre, and the whole glorious panorama of glaciers, mountains, and fiords burst upon our startled gaze. This coastal scenery on “The Greenland” is as magnificent as any Alpine scenery. Peaks tower five or six thousand feet sheer from the depths, with deep blue fiords cleaving their base, and glittering glaciers suspended from their peaks like diamond pendants.

The Commander soon determined our position as being off the town of Holsteinborg—a deduction aided by our sighting a peculiarly shaped mountain peak known as the Kin of Sal. Hence we were not much more than a hundred miles from Godhavn, which we should therefore reach early the next day if the Weather Man remained affable.

At five o'clock the next morning I was awakened by the clank of the anchor chain running through the hawse pipe. In an instant I was on my feet and in two more I was in my clothes and out on deck, this feat being made easier as the result of long practice attending school roll-call. I took a look around. The harbor was spacious with high cliffs towering on either side, with here and there an iceberg hard aground. Safe and snug in the lee of one of these bergs lay the *Peary*, a welcome sight, indeed, to our eyes. In a few minutes Commander McDonald hove in sight paddling an Eskimo kayak and loudly assailing us with a running fire of unacademic Eskimo. Shortly he came aboard and disappeared into the after cabin. Not long afterwards Commander Byrd and Floyd Bennet appeared in an inflated rubber boat, the oddest looking craft I ever saw afloat. They were soon alongside and came aboard to consult with the Commander.

Across from the *Peary* lay a large Danish collier. She had come out from Copenhagen to distribute along the coast at the various settlements the local coal which is mined in Greenland. This coal is obtained at a town called Umanak, where the *Peary* was going in a few hours to bunker up before cutting loose from the last outposts of civilization.

Across the bay an interesting sight met our eyes. It was an old hulk, battered and twisted until it little resembled a ship. This we learned was the historic old *Fox*, the famous exploring vessel of Sir Leopold McClintock. On board of her he set out in 1857 to discover the fate of Sir John Franklin and his men, who had disappeared into the Northwest Passage in 1845. No word of them was ever received until Sir Leopold solved the mystery.

Meanwhile the British admiralty attempted to discover the fate of the lost navigators. When three years had elapsed and no news of the expedition's whereabouts was received, they despatched Admiral Sir Edward Belcher with a relief squadron to go to his assistance. During the following year he searched diligently, but could discover no traces of the location of the expedition. When the full import of this disaster which had befallen Sir John and his one hundred and twenty-eight men in those bleak, ice-ridden waters of the Northwest Passage was at last realized, the entire civilized world stood aghast. From all sides poured in proffers of aid, and messages of condolence and hope deluged Lady Jane Franklin, the brave wife of Sir John. It was in response to an appeal from Lady Franklin to the President of the United States that the first American Arctic Expedition was organized.

Henry Grinnell, a rich ship merchant, played an important part in the organization and financing of this noble philanthropy, and in tribute to his high ideals, the expedition was named in his honor. Lieutenant Edward J. DeHaven went as commander, and Elisha Kent Kane as surgeon, of whom we shall hear much, further on, in connection with the second Grinnell Expedition.

But all of these expeditions returned unsuccessful. The admiralty lost interest in the undertaking, and the names of Sir John and his men were crossed from the navy register, thereby concluding all admiralty participation and further attempts at rescue. Lady Franklin, however, was not content to consider her husband as irretrievably lost until every effort had been made to discover the circumstances of his disappearance. To this end she self-sacrificingly pledged her personal fortune to the cause, and in spite of disheartening reverses, she gamely continued sending forth expedition after expedition. At last her funds became nearly depleted, and still no success had crowned her efforts. But she determined to make one final attempt with the last of her fortune. She therefore enlisted the aid of Sir Leopold McClintock, "the greatest of Arctic sledge men," as he was called by his contemporaries. They determined to purchase the little steam yacht *Fox* to transport the expedition. She was the best that could be obtained for the money, but far from being as large as they desired.

In 1857 the expedition sailed from England for Godhavn. There they made their final adjustments before squaring away for the treacherous ice of Melville Bay. They made their way to this bay, and there on the 13th of August the pack came in solid around them, and they were locked fast for the year. For six months they remained in the pack and were carried nearly a thousand miles to the southward before they broke out in the spring. The vessel was so badly damaged after her experience in the ice that it seemed imperative to return to England immediately, but Sir Leopold, remembering Lady Jane's faith in the expedition, courageously ordered his battered ship headed northward once again. Once more he managed to make Godhavn in spite of his crippled condition, and there with the primitive instruments obtainable he instituted such crude repairs as were possible.

Once again he headed north, and this time without mishap he made his way through Melville Bay and to the head of Lancaster Sound, thence southward to Bellot Strait where they wintered. In rambling about the shore they came

upon a number of bleached skeletons and miscellaneous camp articles. These upon examination proved to bear the stamp of His Majesty's Ships *Erebus* and *Terror*, Sir John's ill-fated vessels. Following up these traces Sir Leopold soon determined that Sir John and all his men had perished in retreating from their ships, which had remained fast in the ice until the dwindling store of supplies forced the expedition to the desperate expedient of attempting a retreat to the Hudson's Bay Company posts down Bach's Great Fish River.

Sir Leopold then returned to Godhavn and after remaining a short while in that port he sailed away for England. There his great discoveries satisfied the tired heart of Lady Franklin, and the curiosity of the British public.

Years later the vessel was sold to the Danish Government and employed in the Greenland trade. In 1915 she was damaged in the ice and towed into Godhavn. She was then beached and left to rot out her days in the ignominious fashion in which we found her.

CHAPTER IX

ICE AND MORE ICE

AFTER we had been in port a good part of the morning, the *Peary* hoisted anchor and started towards the mouth of the harbor, and we needs must follow suit. In the meantime we had loaded up with water and had had a brief rest from our sea voyage. We wanted to reach Etah on August 1st at the latest, and as it was then well along in July it was necessary to make as much haste as was convenient. Therefore, we pushed straight on from Disko Island to South Upernavik as fast as wind and tide would permit us. There the *Peary* joined us loaded deep with coal—the last she would obtain until her return from the far north.

At this town we saw our first exhibition of the remarkable dexterity of the Greenlanders in their frail skin-boats, known as “kayaks.” These craft are about eighteen feet long and twenty inches wide. In them the natives can go out in any kind of a sea, and if a wave capsizes the boat they can right themselves with a few skilled strokes of their paddles, or if they lose the paddle, a twist of the body will suffice. To keep water from seeping in while they are head downward, a tight sealskin shirt is worn. This laces tightly at both wrists and around the head, thus forming a water-tight seam. Furthermore, it tightly buttons to the cockpit coaming of the kayak, making another water-tight fit. Thus the man constitutes almost a part of the boat, and the marvellous feats they perform with this rig can be appreciated only by witnessing these aquatic demonstrations.

We were all very anxious to land to see how the people lived, but on account of the prevalence of whooping cough, the government would not permit us to do so. At Godhavn also this condition prevailed, and we had been allowed to go ashore only for water. Our desire to land was further whetted by a view of many gaudily dressed maidens emerging from church, as the day was Sunday. They were all decked out in elaborate finery, and through the glass they seemed quite attractive. But discipline is discipline, and we were obliged to forego any closer association with these alluring sirens.

The morning after the *Peary* arrived from the coal mines, we set sail for Melville Bay. The very prospect of entering this dread stretch of water was a challenge. Here in the *Fox*, McClintock had been imprisoned in the ice for a year and drifted for over a thousand miles. In 1834, thirty-four whaling vessels were crushed in the pack. Thoughts of such events were far from comforting, and I could not help wondering how our little vessels would fare in the relentless ice. If they were crushed we would be left to retreat as best we could to Upernavik. To become imprisoned for a year would also necessitate the abandonment of the vessels as we had been able to make room for only four months' provisions, because of the space occupied by the aeroplane equipment. But I had confidence in our craft and in our leaders, and I looked forward with an untroubled mind to the thrilling work of ice navigation (such is the assurance of youth).

The Commander had determined to take what is known as the Middle Passage which is directly through the centre of the pack. Therefore, we pushed out boldly from Upernavik and laid our course straight for Cape York—the northern terminus of the Bay and the goal of all who attempt its navigation.

Without sighting any ice we sailed along for some hours. We soon entered a dense fog, and the visibility became very poor. In a short while we began to pass innumerable icebergs. Weaving in and out among the bergs, always vigilant, always tense, we continued on into the Arctic wastes. During this anxious period I was on lookout, and my every minute was occupied in watching for the bergs and directing the helmsman how to avoid them. Out of the white background of the fog these sinister mountains of ice would emerge, first as a thin black line on the sea's surface; then taking shape until high above they towered, grey and lustreless. On all sides they appeared, until the sea was like a boulder-strewn plain through which we threaded our mazy way. Now and then one would disintegrate or capsize with a mighty roar suggestive of a bombardment of artillery, and we would rise and fall on the ensuing swell.

After we had been in this field of bergs for some time, I began to notice occasional little cakes of ice. Soon these increased in number until there was a regular fleet of them. Then as suddenly as they had appeared they disappeared, and we were in open water with only a fugitive berg here and there. I thought to myself that the ancient mariners had greatly exaggerated

the terrors of the ice field when just as it seemed thickening to a degree where our progress would really be impeded, it suddenly was dissipated. But this superior contempt for the old salts did not long hold sway. Gradually a dark, ragged line broke the even white of the enshrouding mist. My first thought was that it was a low berg or “growler” as they are called, but it continued opening out along the horizon until I saw that it was too large for a single berg. Then in a flash it dawned on me that here was the Arctic pack! I watched attentively. Shortly it merged into well-defined pans with thin leads between.

Immediately the Commander clambered aloft to survey the situation. Seeing a favorable opening he directed the helmsman to head her for it. In another second we had passed the outer portals of the pack and had at least entered upon the great ordeal of the expedition. Here even the delay of several weeks would defeat the aims of the expedition, as the short northern summer would be over and the season for flying terminated. If the winds blew from the southward our situation would be precarious in the extreme, and only a kind providence could keep us from an untimely end. Even a few hours of ice pressure against the *Peary's* sides might easily open her seams, and leave her a leaking hulk.

Our watch continued working the vessel through the leads until midnight, when the port watch came on deck. As I lay in my forecastle bunk in the eerie half-light of the northern midnight I could hear the crash of the vessel smashing her way forward through the fog over the encroaching pans. My berth was well up in the bow, and as each blow smote the planking it seemed as if the next surely would stave the bow. But the sturdy oak withstood all onslaughts, and soon the dread sounds became sweet music, and I fell asleep.

When I came on deck the next morning, the vessel was lying moored to a pan as the fog had become so thick that it was impossible to discern the weak spots in the ice. As the fog showed no signs of lifting, the Commander proffered a suggestion. We were to go on a seal hunt! Therefore, we took down our guns and set forth at once. I went along with Abie, as I figured that he would know where to find the quarry from his long association with them in Labrador. For some time we tramped across the ice. Then Abie suddenly turned with a signal for silence. I followed the direction of his eyes and saw a small dark object floating in the open water

of the lead. Silently he unlimbered his rifle, took deliberate aim, and dispatched a ball through the animal's head. His was a perfect shot and made in the one essential spot, since it is necessary to shoot a seal through the head or its dying reflex action will expel the air from its lungs thus causing it to sink. After we saw that the shot had been properly placed and the animal was going to float, I dashed back to the ship to obtain a small boat and a harpoon. The harpoon was soon procured and I sprang into the boat. Just then Byrd and McDonald sauntered over from the *Peary*. Seeing what was up they climbed in with me to recover the prize. I rowed as hard as I could down the lead, since I was fearful that our trophy would sink. A short pull brought us to the spot, and one of the men seized the harpoon and lunged with all his might. But he struck the seal across the hair and the harpoon glanced off, while under the impetus of the blow the seal sank about ten feet. My heart sank with him. Slowly, however, he emerged, and this time with Abie bellowing advice, the harpoon was firmly affixed and we drew our victim out on the ice. It was a young seal, not much larger than a roasting pig. Abie decided that it would make tender eating; so he set about skinning it. After the skinning and cleaning was completed, we stowed the seal in the boat and departed for the ship.

Meanwhile several of the other boys had scattered over the floes, Dick Salmon being hull down some distance away. As the fog had begun to rot out, it was decided to get under weigh immediately. Therefore the recall signal was sounded from the *Peary's* siren, and the boys came scurrying back. Poor Dick, however, had an intervening lead open between him and the vessel; so he was forced to hang up until he could find a place to cross. Seeing his plight, the Commander ran the *Bowdoin* down towards him, and just as the lead again closed he came down on him and picked him up.

We were now nearly in the centre of the pack, and with clearer skies our hopes of getting clear of the pack began to rise. Steadily we forged to the northward through the thick pans. So far there had been little wind, and the ice had not packed together very heavily. Towards evening, however, under the influence of the tide, the ice began to pack, and the *Bowdoin* was caught in a nip. We were jammed as if in a vise, between two great floes of ice. Robbie was in charge as the Commander had gone aboard the *Peary* to con her through the ice. Immediately Robbie ordered us out on the ice to try to break away the jagged edges which threatened to impale us. We pounded

away with heavy timbers and managed to break off several sharp points, thus making an easier berth for the vessel. But try as we would, we could neither go forward nor backward. The *Peary* observing our situation swung around and came ramming back to our aid. With the tremendous blows of her massive bow, she planed off great pieces of the floes until finally she broke through to our relief. In a short time, however, she herself was inextricably caught. The pressure was considerable, and the *Peary* assumed a list of five or six degrees.

Dr. Koelz soon came over to the *Bowdoin* in royal bad humor, complaining that the grinding of the ice against the side of the *Peary* had prevented him from sleeping. Furthermore, on trying to leave his cabin, the pressure had so contracted the vessel that he found his door so jammed it would not open, and the combined efforts of three men were necessary to liberate the Doctor who came aboard the *Bowdoin* for refuge. Long afterwards we discovered that the vessel had contracted several inches from the tremendous pressure.

In a few hours the tide again shifted, and to our great relief the vessel was freed of the pressure. Then we again got under weigh, and were soon ploughing along at a good rate of speed, considering the handicaps under which we labored. At this time we began to wonder where we were, as for some days we had been unable to determine our position by observation, because of the thick weather.

For five days we had been at sea. We had encountered heavy fogs, icebergs and the savage pack, and we had come through safe and undaunted. Now as the weather was clearing, our wonder as to where we were increased. Had some fell current swept us far from our course? Had our many zigzags in the ice carried us in circles? Where were we indeed? The weather continued to clear until we could discern the blue sky overhead and the pale iceblink all around. Then the Commander, with his glass clapped on the northern horizon, suddenly became aware of a dark streak in the even white of the iceblink.

“Land clouds,” said the Commander, as he swept them with his binoculars.

Land clouds they indeed seemed to be, and all eyes were thenceforth strained to catch a view of the land itself. Meanwhile the man aloft had been saying little and looking much. Suddenly rang out the long-hoped-for cry, “Land ho!”

In thirty seconds every man who could scramble to a place in the rigging was there, and each was eager to spy out the distant peaks which soon came into view. Immediately we put on full speed in order to reach them before the ice should again become impassable. As if some wayward spirit had sensed our wish, the floes came crunching and sliding into a compact mass, rendering futile all attempts to proceed. We were therefore regretfully forced to lose more precious hours. These hours were doubly precious as it was already July 31st, and every hour counted if we were to reach our destination on our scheduled date, August 1st.

As I looked out over the slowly drifting ice, with its unending white broken only by the thin dark lines of the ever-opening and closing leads, towards the rugged cliffs on the far horizon, standing like grim sentries at the portals of the North, I wondered why we had come. Why had this company left all that was dearest to them; their loved ones; their congenial firesides; the labors in which until so recently they had been engrossed? Why had we endured the perils of wind, and sea and ice, borne discomforts and hardships, sacrificed personal ease and safety? For what had we sailed three thousand miles across tractless seas? For a moment it seemed utter folly to have come all this distance for things that at best appeared vague and indistinct! We had all been in comfort and safety at home. For what conceivable reason would intelligent men turn their backs on these pretentious inducements? For a moment I pondered. Suddenly in my mind's eye I saw another ice waste not dissimilar to this one, and I visioned other hills, this time in the west, hills on which no human eye had rested—our quest. Then three small specks clove the deep blue of the eastern sky. Soon the hum of engines echoed from berg and hummock, and they resolved into aeroplanes—our planes. Nearer they soared, over the first range of hills. Then they wheeled about and soon receded into the endless vault of heaven whence they had come. My heart leaped within me. I knew why we had come. In our blood surged the age-old spirit of adventure which drove the first Viking to the Arctic seas; which sent Columbus across the terror-strewn western ocean; which lured Sir John Franklin to his lonesome grave. I felt my blood flow fast. The same old urge had gripped me, and obedient to its demands I, too, had joined the adventurous throng and seen home and ease fade astern as the vessel's prow pointed for the unknown lands over the horizon's edge.

CHAPTER X

WE TAKE THE AIR

EARLY on the morning of August 1st, we broke through the last of the pack of Cape York and laid our course around the shore ice as yet unbroken from the Cape. In a short time we had rounded it and were finally out of Melville Bay, a departure which caused no sorrow on the part of any of us. The body of water which we had now entered was known as Smith Sound, a name given it by William Baffin in honor of one of his supporters. It stretches from Cape York to beyond Etah where it opens out into Kane Basin. Usually the Sound is free from pack ice except on the western side where a heavy stream of it flows to the southward.

For several hours we sailed without seeing a sign of any living thing save a few birds. Suddenly two kayaks darted out from the shore. With a few deft strokes of the paddle their occupants brought them alongside, and we heard the musical hail "Ochshinai!" followed by a demand for "bacca." In response to their hail Robbie tossed them two plugs which they aptly caught, waved their arms with delight and yelled, "Quoin-amik!" (Thank you!). As we sailed away, we could see them lovingly caressing their prizes.

The wind freshened as we bent our course to the north and we were soon bowling along with a bone in our teeth. The coast flashed by. Soon Cape Alexander, "the Cape Horn of the North," which lies half-way between the Pole and the Arctic Circle, hove in sight. As we rounded this wicked old promontory, the customary vicious squall snapped at us. We were soon past the cape, however, and once again entered smooth waters. Here we could see the walrus breaking water all about us, and every now and then a savage, white-tusked face would leer at us as we scudded along. Now and then almost beneath our bows an entire herd would blow and disappear in a mass of white water. At nine o'clock that night, we worked our way into Foulke Fiord, and there dead ahead lay the haven of our hopes, the goal of our endeavors—Etah!



**Commander MacMillan: with an eskimo child; in flying costume;
in the ice barrel.**



Brother John's glacier and Alida Lake, Etah, North Greenland.



There in the bright light of the Arctic night glistened the tranquil waters of the fiord, and the crumbling cliffs reflected a ruddy welcome. Far away up the fiord sparkled a great glacier, an arm of the huge inland Mer de Glace. Close at hand bubbled and splashed a tiny stream which tumbled down among the rugged boulders from the melting snow above and trickled across the coastal intervalle which was rich with lush grass. We stood there staring and straining our eyes for some sign of the expected village. All we saw on the slope above the fringe of grass was the hillside in which there

were two holes in the ground, the remains of igloos of a former age, only these and nothing more!

In a few moments we had rounded Provision Point, so named from its use as a supply depot on the Commander's previous expeditions. Thinking this location favorable for an anchorage, he immediately ordered the anchor dropped. A quick heave with the anchor chain announced the successful completion of the outward voyage. We of the ship personnel had consummated our mission; now it was for the aviators to accomplish theirs.

The clatter of the anchor chain acquainted Melkon with the fact that we had arrived.

"What kind of postage stamps do they use here?" he called up the companionway.

Receiving no enlightenment on this subject, he started up on deck. Poking his head above the hatch he inquired with a puzzled expression on his face:

"Why, where is the post office?"

The Commander extended his arm shorewards with a dramatic gesture and said simply and significantly:

"Look!"

Melkon took one long look at those two holes in the ground and scanned that stern and rock-bound coast. Then it dawned upon him that we were now in the real Arctic, far beyond the last pale of civilization and its appurtenances. With a subdued air he replied:

"Ah, now I understand."

We had rather expected to find a considerable encampment of Eskimos and were somewhat disappointed to see that the country was apparently depopulated. But in a short time from the upper end of the fiord by the glacier we saw two kayaks approaching. Soon the Commander recognized their occupants as Noo-ka-ping-wa and In-you-gee-to, both old friends and companions of the Commander's on former sleighing expeditions. They were delighted to see the Commander, and informed us that they represented the entire male population of the town with the exception of old Ak-kom-mo-ding-wa, who was coming as rapidly as his advanced years would allow. He soon appeared in a dilapidated canvas canoe, a gift of

some explorer. He had abandoned the kayak in favor of the canoe, as the smaller craft's cramped quarters no longer felt as comfortable as of yore. He was a comical old loafer, and his behavior caused us much amusement. His lazy habits and good-natured disposition soon gained for him the sobriquet of, "The Beloved Vagabond."

Next morning at five o'clock sharp, we were roused out for an early start at constructing a landing place for the planes. After a hasty breakfast we piled into the boats and rowed over to the beach which had been chosen for the assembling of the planes. It was strewn with boulders and small rocks, and the only way of ridding the beach of them was to pry them out and roll them away. At this task everybody was soon engaged from the Commander down. All morning we labored, and by noon the sand was well cleared of them.

Our next task was to construct the runway for hauling the planes up to the beach, since the wheels would otherwise sink in the soft sand. For this purpose we requisitioned the sides of the cases in which the wings had been packed. To get them ashore was somewhat of a problem, and we tried several methods before we hit upon the ultimate one of lashing two boats together, thus forming a raft of sufficient stability upon which to load them.

After landing the planes, crosspieces were nailed under them, and these were weighed down with heavy rocks to keep the whole apparatus from floating away with the tide. When the runway was completed, the Navy men began bringing in the wings. In a short time the first fuselage was slung over the side of the *Peary*, into the water, and then brought ashore lashed between two boats in order that it might not tip over.

When the plane had grounded on the runway, all hands tailed on her tackle and walked her up the beach. Then the wings were set up, and the aviators secured them to the fuselage while we supported them on our backs. Having been assembled, the plane was then rolled back into the water and taken off to its anchorage.



The *Peary*.



Expedition plane at the stern of the *Bowdoin*.

In three days all of the planes were assembled and ready to go. It indeed gave us a thrill to see them soaring up from the waters of Etah Fiord and flying over a land and sea which never before had seen the shadow of a bird larger than a glaucous gull. The Eskimos also looked on with wide-eyed

wonder, and many were the “Ahs” and “Naveos” as the great birds left the water amidst clouds of spray and went skimming over berg and glacier.



Launching first plane at Etah.

We had got away to a propitious start for our flying, and the prospects for success in the fullest measure seemed bright. Our hopes rose all too soon, however, for at this point old Torngak, the evil spirit of the North, angered at this invasion of his realm, took a hand in the proceedings. With driving snow and squalls he came sweeping down on us before we had been in Etah three days. Then his tactics changed, and he blanketed us in fog. For but three days of the entire summer did he sulk in his tent; during the remainder of the time he was either hovering in the offing or engaged in active offense through driving storms or insidious fog. But in spite of these handicaps, on every occasion at all suitable for flying the Commander and the aviators were away in their endeavor to penetrate the unknown area. To do this it was necessary to lay down a base between Etah and the Polar Sea. The planes were of the type known as amphibian, equipped to land either in the water or on the land. Equipped with skids they might possibly utilize the ice. An examination of the drift ice of Smith Sound precluded all possibility of its being used as an aviation field, covered as it was with pools of water, cracks, and pressure ridges. The ice covered the mountains of Ellesmere Land, threatening disaster to any plane which had to make a forced landing.

It was therefore necessary to rely on the water of the fiords, which should afford a safe, ice-free landing place. Time after time the aviators searched

for open water, but fate was against them, and at nearly every visit the waters were choked with cakes of ice large enough to puncture a plane. Several times they found an apparently ice-free spot, but in a few hours the ice would return, rendering it impossible to again utilize that point for a base. The Commander had confidently believed from his sledging experience, and from the testimony of the Eskimos, that these fiords would be free of ice. The unforeseen presence of the ice can probably be explained, however, by the unprecedentedly short and cold summer we were experiencing. Not even in the memory of the oldest Eskimo had such unfortunate meteorological conditions prevailed.

In addition to the remarkable summer, or rather lack of summer, with which we were embarrassed, the usual run of engine trouble and other mishaps fell to our lot. One morning I was sitting down in the forecabin when the alarming news became known that a plane was sinking. Robbie and John Jaynes immediately took energetic measures to save the plane, and all hands came tumbling on deck. At the moment I arrived, the plane had sunk until the water was level with the propeller shaft of the inverted motor. She lay poised for a final plunge to the depths, and John and Robbie were desperately striving to get a line on the shaft. Rocheville, a Navy mechanic, lay aft on the tail gallantly trying to counter-balance the weight of the water forward and bring the plane on a level keel. The line was soon made fast, and just in time, as in another second she would have taken the last plunge. All hands then tailed on the line, and gradually the plane emerged. In a short time the deck was above water, and the aircraft was in a position to be bailed out. It was a fortunate rescue, but the plane never flew again in spite of our efforts.

The days not occupied in overhauling the planes or not rendered worthless by storms were devoted to flights over Ellesmere Land in search of a base. The presence of drifting ice, however, had dealt our planes a deathblow. By the 20th of August the Commander realized that the planes could not add to the results he had obtained with dog sledges in 1914. At best they might put him at the edge of the Polar Sea, but they would never carry him out over the unexplored district on which he had previously traveled off shore one hundred and fifty miles.

In the realm of science, however, the expedition produced notable results. Lieutenant Benjamin Rigg of the Coast and Geodetic Survey obtained

valuable sets of magnetic and tidal observations at nearly every point at which we tarried. The first automatic tidal recorder to be used in the far north was also put in operation by him. Dr. Koelz, the expedition's naturalist, also did some very valuable work. His collection of fish and bird specimens was large and contained many rare species. The National Geographic photographers obtained excellent photographs of Arctic scenes and people. For the first time far northern scenes were recorded by the new natural color process of photography. All-together the scientific results more than justified the expedition and made up for the unfortunate termination of the flying.

On this strip of coast upon which Etah is located dwells a group of people—the northernmost race in the world. These people are known to the white race as Eskimos, which means “meat eaters,” but among themselves the appellation Innuut, “the people,” is applied.

They are a very strange group and little is known about them. It is thought that they are of Mongolian origin. Whence they came and by what path, however, has always remained a mystery and is apparently little closer to solution now than formerly. At the present time they are distributed along the Arctic coasts of America, Greenland and Eastern Asia.

The particular branch of the race which lives on the North Greenland shore was unknown until 1818, when Sir John Ross worked his little vessel through the ice of Melville Bay to Cape York. As he lay off the Cape he observed several black dots moving towards him over the ice. These soon resolved into Eskimos, and dog sleds. On their nearer approach he entered into a conversation with them through an interpreter from South Greenland. He then told them he came from far to the south. Upon the receipt of this information they assumed an incredulous air and informed him that surely no one could live in the south as all their ice drifted off in that direction and by this time that region must be absolutely choked with it.

For many years these “Arctic Highlanders,” to use the rather poetical name Ross gave them, remained unvisited. In 1850-51, however, Saunders wintered among them in the ship *North Star*. He was the first man ever really to live with them. To-day on the bay named after his ship, Knud Rasmussen, the explorer, maintains a trading station.

Two years after the departure of Saunders, the little brig *Advance* with Elisha Kent Kane, “America’s first Arctic explorer,” in command, rounded Cape York, and gallantly beat up Smith Sound to Renssaeler Harbor. While Kane was there the Eskimos sledged up to see him. With a gun on his shoulder he went forth to meet them, with so great suspicion did he regard them. But they appeared peaceable and he had no occasion to employ the firearm. Kane brought back the first reliable reports on the Eskimos. However, he did not make much use of their knowledge and skill, nor of their dog teams, in his explorations. Seven years after Kane, in 1860, Dr. Isaac Israel Hayes, one of Kane’s men, revisited Etah and entered into extensive relations with the natives. For the first time did the Eskimos aid in the work of exploration in which they were later to take so conspicuous a part with Peary and MacMillan. But Hayes never fully trusted them, and for awhile he considered himself and his men the objects of a conspiracy on the part of the Eskimos to murder them all.

After Hayes, with the exception of a winter which the crew of the *Polaris* spent just north of Etah, the Eskimos remained unvisited until the arrival of Peary. Peary quickly realized the great value of the Eskimo and his sturdy team of dogs. He gained their confidence and esteem. Without experiencing any of the evils which the earlier expeditions had expected from the Eskimos, he worked with them for eighteen years. It was largely due to the skill and energy of the Eskimos and the power in their sturdy dogs that Peary eventually conquered the Pole. In 1876 Markham, of the English North Pole Expedition, reported to his government that he considered it impossible to attain the Pole. He relied on the unaided labors of his men to pull the sledges, a terrific task which well demonstrated the bravery and stamina of the British. In a little over a month, Markham and his men traveled seventy-three miles from the ship, advancing their sledges by man power alone, and nearly dying with exhaustion. Peary in three days by the aid of Eskimos and dog sledges exceeded this distance with ease. This clearly shows the superiority of the Eskimo method of travel. Peary never had cause to regret his employment of the Eskimo, and they did not play him false in spite of the beliefs of the older explorers.

Four years after the Pole had been conquered, the American flag again entered Smith Sound. This time it snapped in the breeze over the head of one who would bring it new renown. Upon the scene had appeared the fit

successor of the great Peary—MacMillan. With the aid of Eskimos and dog teams in the spring of 1914 he turned his steps westward over Ellesmere and Axel Heiberg Land. One hundred and fifty miles he penetrated the Polar Sea towards the land which Peary had seen. But he found this land had been nothing but a mirage, and regretfully he and his Eskimos turned their steps homeward. For four years he lived among them, and studied their way of living, and his researches greatly extended our knowledge concerning them. Thus at last the Eskimo came into his own as the helpmate and companion of the white man on his trips in the Arctic regions.

On the 1925 MacMillan expedition I had the opportunity of observing them and their interesting customs. At the time of year in which I was among them they were living in sealskin tents or tupiks. The rock igloos had been abandoned for their summer airing. The Eskimos removed the dome of their arched rock igloos on the arrival of warm weather. This airing of the igloos is about the only sanitary act the natives perform. They rarely if ever wash themselves or their clothes.

Their methods of food preservation also are rather distasteful to a civilized person. After walrus or other meat has been secured, it is cut up and then stacked in a pile. Then over all is placed a large number of rocks. In this way it is stored until there is need of it. In a few days these caches can be located by the smell alone.

But at all things requiring a good eye, a cool head and a steady hand, they excel. A good example of this is the way in which they make their rope. It is made by taking the skin of a seal which has been so skinned that the hide comes off in concentric bands. Then one of the natives pulls the band along while another holds a knife. Even a small tremble in the hand of the one holding the knife would cut through the thin line, ruining it, but so accurate is their handiwork that the lines vary in width hardly at all and the rope seems so uniform that one would think it had been made in a machine. They also skin small seals in such a way that the skin pulls off absolutely whole with but one perforation. This skin is so carefully removed from the flesh that it will hold air without leaking!

They display the greatest ingenuity in the manufacture of all their instruments and utensils. The point in their harpoons, and the way they employ the sealskin bag to float the walrus which sinks when it is killed, all

show the innate skill and ingenuity in the race. They are never at a loss and never “stumped.” Once someone was repairing a sledge, and he could not find a drill. An Eskimo stepped forward and coolly shot a hole through the runner. They are like that in everything, always alert, always on the job.

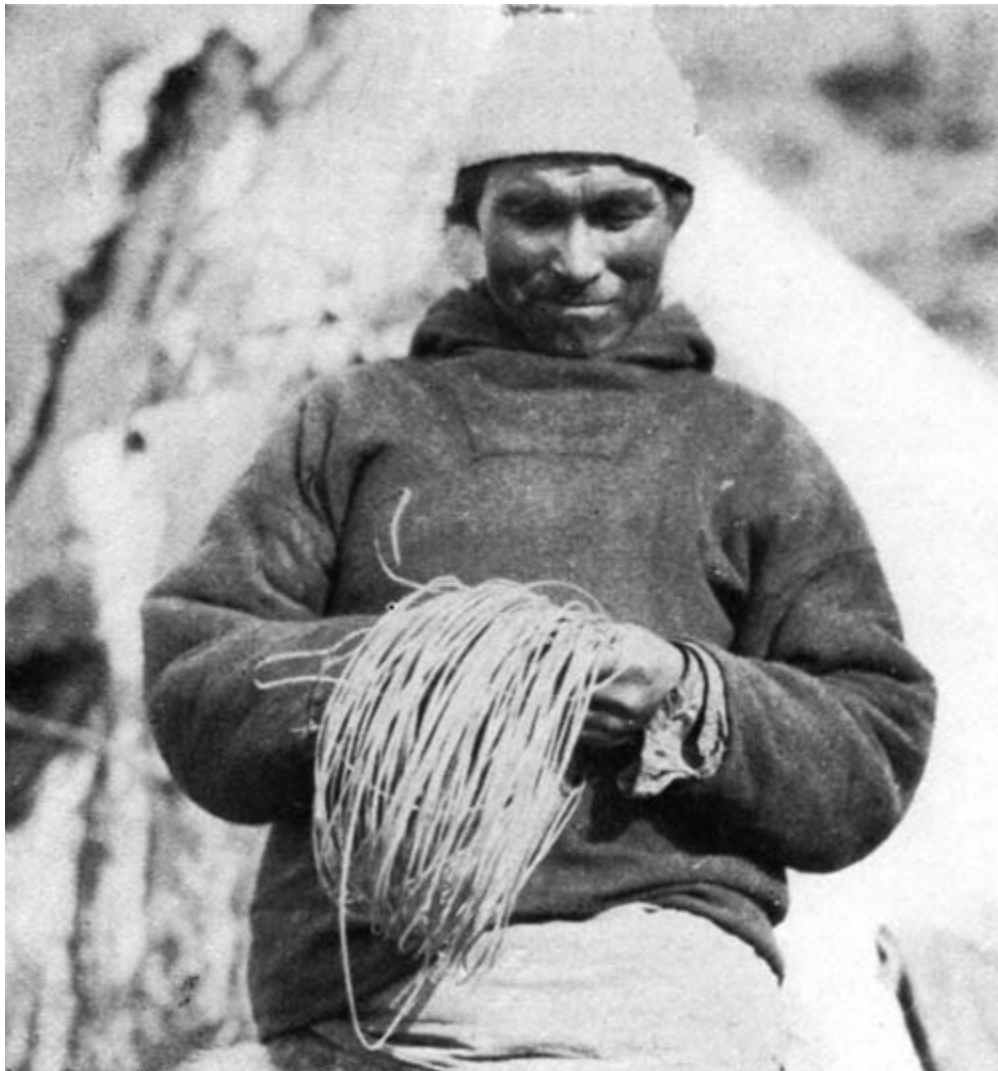


Eskimo kiddie with his mother's coat on.



Even Eskimo boys of Ig-loo-da-houny have a sweet tooth.

Their philosophy of life is also interesting. The hard struggle they wage against the inhospitable environment in which they live has not made them an ill-tempered, sullen race. On the contrary, they are always laughing and smiling. A good joke is much enjoyed. On one occasion several of our photographers wanted pictures of live ducks on the nest. The Eskimos learning of this wish took a dead duck and propped it up on a nest with walrus whiskers so that it looked quite lifelike. Then they motioned to the photographers who cautiously crept forward, making every effort to keep from making a noise. The Eskimos meanwhile nearly died laughing. They are little inclined to worry. Old Panikpa admirably summarized their outlook on life when asked if he was not worried on a very dangerous strip of ice. "No," he replied, "I let Peary do all the worrying."



**In-you-gee-to makes a coil of rawhide line out of skin
of which he is justly proud.**



The only Eskimo family in Etah.

One may think them unintelligent and mentally deficient, but they have keen intellects and they use some very clever devices, in one instance utilizing advanced engineering principles. In the building of their circular rock igloos they employ the cantilever principle—an engineering method used in some of our greatest bridges. One would not expect an Eskimo to know a principle which our greatest engineers employ.

Altogether these children of the ice are a group of people from whom we may learn much. Though they are one of the world's most primitive peoples, they are in some respects the peers of those who are generally considered to be the most highly civilized.

CHAPTER XI

MY FARTHEST NORTH

WHILE we were in Etah, Dr. Koelz, the expedition's naturalist, decided that he would like to travel a few miles up the Greenland shore to collect specimens. As he needed someone to help him row the dory and run the outboard motor which he intended to use, I volunteered to go with him. This arrangement being approved by the Commander, we cast off from the ship at about ten o'clock on the night of August 15th. With us journeyed two Eskimos, Panikpa and Kanga, who wished to reach the Eskimo settlement of Anoritok which is just beyond Refuge Harbor, the Commander's headquarters in 1923-24.

We made our way down Etah Fiord in the calm of the Arctic night, with scarcely a breath of wind ruffling the surface of the water. Soon we were off Sunrise Point where Hayes and his men used to walk from their ship to observe the sunrise after the long, five-month, winter night.

We now emerged from the shelter of the cliffs. As we did so we were hit by a savage squall. It was too late to retreat into the fiord as turning about was a maneuver fraught with danger. All we could do was to plug ahead off the lee shore under the shelter of an iceberg and then square away for the north. This I did and in a few moments we were clear of the berg and then away we went before wind and sea. A very steep, choppy sea, probably fourteen or fifteen feet high, was running in from the southward. Under ordinary conditions a sea of that height would not be cause for any great concern, but these waves had nearly vertical faces and the crests were breaking continually. The only thing to do was to keep the dory running off before the sea as she would be capsized or swamped if she turned broadside on for even the briefest interval. I held the tiller stick in both hands and kept our little vessel's head pointing straight to leeward in spite of incessant attempts on the part of the waves to "broach her to."

The Eskimos were quite frightened when they saw those big seas. Old Panikpa kept waving for us to go closer to the shore. But even one glance at that unbroken line of jagged rocks and leaping surf convinced both Koelz

and myself that it would be suicidal to attempt a landing on that stretch of shore-line.

All went well for about ten minutes. Then as I glanced aft over my shoulder I saw a tremendous comber seemingly hang directly over my head. I thought to myself that if we ever came out of that one with the boat still floating we would be lucky. The water mounted higher and higher on the stern as the dory's tail cocked skyward until it was just level with the top of the coaming. Then with a swish the crest of the wave came crashing down over the counter. The engine was drenched and immediately stopped. I was soaked through and through and there were several inches of water in the boat. We started to swing broadside on, in the trough of the sea. One more wave would have finished us for good, and with a dead engine this was all too probable, in fact inevitable if the boat should swing enough to present her side to the sea. I yelled to Koelz to grab the oars and keep her off side before it until I got the engine going. Koelz with great presence of mind fitted the thole pins and soon had the oars shipped. In a few seconds we were again slowly moving along on our course, owing to skillful handling by the Doctor. In a few moments the engine was in running order and we were bowling along as merrily as before.

In a short time we were in calm water in the channel between Littleton Island and the mainland. It was named by Inglefield, the first man to penetrate upper Smith Sound. In the channel between the island and the mainland lies the wreck of the old *Polaris* which broke the world's record for farthest north, in 1871. On this island, Sir Allen Young, in the *Pandora*, left mail for the British North Polar Expedition. On the first Greely Relief Expedition of 1882, Beebe deposited a cache of provisions there. It has always received prominent mention in all Arctic journals dealing with this region, and Dr. Koelz and I were interested in seeing it at close quarters.

The wind was still blowing with great force, so hard in fact that I shut down the motor and rigged a sail with a tarpaulin and an oar, which made the boat go even faster than it did with the motor. In a few moments we were through the channel and bound up the coast for Cape Hatherton. For several hours we continued under sail until at last we were pretty close to the Cape. We then cut in for the shore and made our way through loose ice to the beach. We landed at five o'clock in the morning after a rather exciting voyage, to say the least.

Sleep now appeared about the most desirable sensation possible for human beings to experience and rolling our blankets on the hard ground we went to it. We slept for what seemed years, but we awakened eventually. Now the question was whether it was morning, afternoon or night. The never-setting midnight sun gave but little clew to the time, and our watches had stopped! The time went on and soon we did not know what day it was. This was an awful fix, as we would not know when the days we had planned to remain in this vicinity had elapsed. But we did not let the time question bother us, and we started to accomplish the tasks we had set ourselves.

Our primary object was to collect as many bird and fish specimens as possible, which we set about to do immediately. But another wish which we entertained, though it was subordinate to the first, was to make as high a latitude on the Greenland coast as our meager equipment and time, spared from our real objective, would warrant. With this goal in mind we set forth on what we considered to be our second day out from the ship. The gas which we had saved by sailing rendered a considerable trip under engine power practicable. Thus we set forth from our camp with all the gasoline we had, beyond a surplus to enable us to buck a storm if we had to on the way back to the ship from the camp. In an hour or so we were around Cape Hatherton and bound on up the coast. There was not much pack ice in sight except far to the westward, and the iceblink gave promise of more to the northward. A breeze from that direction also hindered our advance, but by noon we were off the mouth of Refuge Harbor. Here we were on the edge of Kane Sea, and we could see the glittering Polar pack slowly drifting southward. We crossed the entrance to the harbor in a few moments, and I hove away to round Cairn Point. At this juncture Koelz espied several large floes moving in towards the entrance of the harbor. Beyond them there were wide levels of half a mile or so between the scattered pans of the pack.

I was hoping that my companion might express a wish to go on to the most northern Eskimo village in the world—Anoritok, some five miles beyond Refuge Harbor, where some of the Smith Sound natives happened to be living. Possibly we might have done this had it not been for running ice off Cairn Point which Koelz considered a bit dangerous. Reluctantly we gave up the idea and headed back for Refuge Harbor. There the ice had not broken out as it usually does, and if the *Bowdoin* had been there she might have had great difficulty in reaching the open water beyond.

After a leisurely lunch we started back to our camp and arrived there some time in the evening, probably as the sun was bearing pretty well north. The next two days we spent in collecting specimens, and then Koo-e-tig-e-to arrived with a letter from the Commander requesting us to return to the ship, as he would have to start south in a short while and wanted us there in plenty of time. So once again our little boat put to sea; this time bound south—away from the glorious land of the midnight sun and the glittering ice fields. Our stay in the Arctic fairyland had been all too short. I realized with sorrow that in a few days we would be bound for civilization and the pleasant days in Etah and north of there would be but a memory.

On the way to Etah we stopped at Polaris beach where the crew of the *Polaris* wintered after the wreck of their ship. There we found some old pieces of iron belonging to that ship. We also stopped for a few moments on Littleton Island. But in a short time we had left the island and Cape Ohlsen astern. Cape Ohlsen recalls the name of one of Kane's men who died close by. We were thankful that the bones of none of our men lay bleaching on this inhospitable coast. Thus we started onward filled with memories, until with a start I found we were off Sunrise Point. In a few moments we were in Etah and aboard the ship after a most enjoyable trip up the coast. We learned that it was August the 20th, thus we had been away five days.

CHAPTER XII

WE BREAK INTO SOCIETY

THE formation of new ice on the surface of Etah Fiord grimly brought home to us the dread reality that the relentless Arctic winter was now all but upon us. To flee before this dire warning was our only recourse, and the Commander ruefully gave the word to pack up and make all speed for home. The elements had barred our way to the great unknown area of the Polar Sea, but we had at least carried the outer ramparts through our new and untried means of attack by air. Now the time for temporizing had passed, and we must fly before young ice, snowstorms and September winds.

Thus it was with regret that we broke out the anchor from the mud of Etah Harbor on the morning of August 21st, and headed out through the channel, and across the walrus grounds towards Cape Alexander. There the usual squall met us, and this time with such force that we were forced to go into McCormick's Bight, (Pandora Harbor), to await the abatement of the storm.

In a few hours it calmed down sufficiently to permit us to round the Cape, and we set our course for Ig-loo-da-houny. At this place we arrived at about six in the evening, and dropped anchor to await the arrival of the *Peary* which was still at Etah loading aboard the last of our equipment.

At Ig-loo-da-houny was encamped a considerable number of Eskimos, including several valuable assistants of Peary's. Among these was Oo-blooya, a very noted aide of Peary's on nearly all his trips in the eighteen years of his work. Also sojourning at this settlement was Sipsoo of the heroic starvation party of 1906, which broke the world's record of farthest north. Koo-la-ting-wa of the successful Polar trip also was present. Even Ah-pellah, assistant to the notorious Dr. Frederick Cook, on his now famous Polar hoax of 1907-1909, was eking out his existence at this spot. Indeed a notable group of Eskimos.

That evening in the forecastle we gave a motion picture show for the Eskimos, exhibiting some of the Commander's Arctic pictures, and several

reels of Melkon's pie-throwing comedy. The only one amused by the comedy was Melkon, since its crass horseplay was too broad for the Eskimo sense of humor. But when there flashed on the screen the pictures of themselves and their environment, they shouted and yelled with the sheerest childlike delight. And when the half-dozen belles saw themselves depicted, their joy was greater than that of any Hollywood Magdalene of seven husbands.

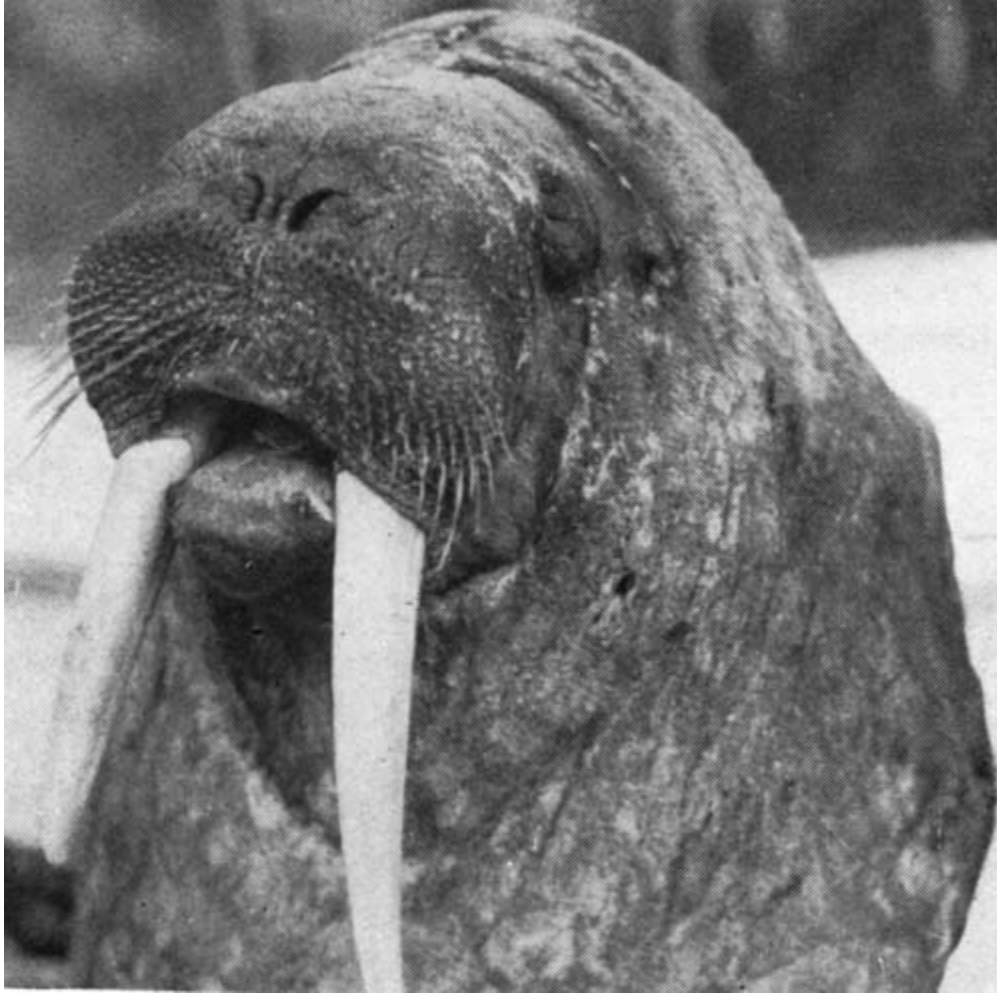
The next day the Commander flew down to Karna to see his old friend and companion of many previous expeditions, E-took-a-shoo. When E-took-a-shoo saw the plane come skimming along the land in front of his tupik he was flabbergasted. But when the Commander invited him to fly back to Ig-loo-da-houny, he simply said, "Wait till I get my mittens." Then with utter confidence in his own safety while he was at the Commander's side, he mounted into this strange machine and flew back to Ig-loo-da-houny with as little concern as if he had been on his own sledge.

In the meanwhile the *Peary* had arrived to load on the remaining plane, and we got under weigh for Karna to return E-took-a-shoo to his home. On the way to Karna we had to sail through a long stretch of uncharted water. The Commander had scrutinized it from the air, and apparently it was safe and free from obstructions.

We were unconcernedly sailing along when suddenly there was a grinding shock, and the vessel trembled from stem to stern. The bow lurched skyward, and we came to an abrupt stop. At the time, the Commander was below donning his oilskins, as a driving sleet was coming on. In two jumps he was on deck, and with one swift glance he took in our predicament. Immediately he reversed the engine, but we were hard and fast aground. The all important question faced us: "Was the tide rising or falling?" In a few moments it was apparent that it was falling. The Commander at once ordered us to throw overboard the thirty barrels of gasoline which constituted our deck load. This was but the work of a few moments. Then a kedge anchor was run astern to see if we might heave her off. But the tide was falling very rapidly and all of our efforts were frustrated. It was now apparent that we should have to wait until the tide rose again,—a matter of twelve hours or so.



The *Bowdoin* on the rocks in North Greenland.



Head of 2000-pound walrus, killed at Etah, North Greenland.

Meanwhile the barrels were slowly drifting away down wind, and the Commander perceived that if they were to be saved immediate measures were necessary. Therefore he despatched us in the small boats to recover them. We tumbled over the side into the dories and were soon scudding before the curling seas which lay between us and the barrels. Once among the barrels, we swung our boat's nose into the wind, and the laborious process of salvaging the barrels was begun. Koelz held us steady with the oars, and I set to work putting lines on the barrels. Leaning over the stern of a pitching dory in a rough chop and striving to maintain a grip on a heavy steel drum which was rising and falling in opposite sequence to the boat, was indeed a task not to be underestimated. It was necessary to lift the barrel partly out of the water with one hand and float a clove hitch under it with the other hand. Every pitch of the boat nearly wrenched my arm from

its socket. The icy water almost froze my hands, and soon they were white and numb. We stuck to this work, however, until all barrels had been gathered and tethered into rafts. These were then anchored to prevent further drifting and left to be later picked up by the vessel.



Oomiak: Eskimo women's boat, made of sealskins.



South Greenland kayak.

After three exhausting hours of this toil, they were all securely bound together and anchored. Then we returned to the ship. By this time the tide had fallen so far that she lay on her side at an acute angle. In fact, the incline was so great that it was impossible to stand on the deck. We had to walk along the bulwarks, and to cross the decks necessitated pulling oneself up by a rope. In the cabin one had to stand on the side walls, and the galley stove was so tilted that to cook on it was impossible. We had to make a meal of cold willy and other preparations which required no cooking. Despite the soggy coldness of it all, food never did taste better!

The hours dragged slowly by as we waited for the tide to rise. The *Peary* had been summoned to our aid, and she soon came hugging the far side of Herbert Island. Taking soundings as she went, she came nosing up within a few hundred feet of the *Bowdoin*. By the time she arrived the tide had begun to rise, and the water was slowly creeping up the deck of our ship. We clapped shut the portholes and battened down the hatches, and waited. By inches the tide rose, and the vessel began to show signs of stirring. We began taking up on the kedge anchor. The *Peary* was ready for immediate action, when a most astounding phenomenon took place. About a half-mile away lay a huge million ton iceberg. Suddenly we heard an ear-rending roar. We looked towards the great berg. Slowly it up-ended with great fragments hurtling in every direction, then rocked from side to side as it regained its balance. In a few seconds a monstrous swell came rolling towards us from this cataclysm, and we were lifted gently from the ledge and swept gracefully into the open water beyond. We stared aghast; could we believe our senses? Yes, there could be no doubt of it, we were free of the ledge. We looked after the great receding wave and felt that at last the baneful spell of Torngak had been shattered!

Quickly we hauled aboard the barrels, set things to rights and made all sail for Cape York. There we arrived early on the morning of August 27th, and we indeed realized that we had left none too soon, for the winds were white with winter snow. The Commander stopped for a brief visit and to present a few gifts to the Eskimos encamped there; then we squared away for South Greenland. Across the now ice-free Melville Bay we flew with a roaring boreal wind, speeding our progress home. For three days we ran dead before it with huge seas coming up from the stern and rolling under our vessel.

After we left Cape York, the midnight sun was with us no longer, and we had darkness for the first time in over a month. It indeed seemed strange to see the icebergs again bathed in a sunset flush, gleaming in the distance like old Greek temples of delicate pink marble. As twilight shaded into darkness and the stars blossomed once more in the heavens, we sat long on the quarter deck drinking in the infinite beauty of the night, silent save for the murmur of the water beneath the prow.



At Sukkertoppen.

At last, late in the evening of August 30th, after a remarkably rapid run from Cape York, we made our way into the harbor of Holsteinborg in Danish Greenland. We had heard much about this port from our companions who had made previous voyages, especially regarding the attractions of its maidens. Our expectations were aroused, and great was our chagrin when the governor refused us permission to land. The Commander came to the rescue, and after he had wirelessly to the Governor-general, he at last obtained consent for the expedition to go ashore. This permission was extended only until nightfall, however. Thus any participation in the much-heralded Greenland dances was frustrated. We went ashore, nevertheless, and were at least permitted to take photographs of the Greenland belles dressed in their barbaric finery. In return for their smiles we presented them with some beads and trinkets. Then we left them and went for a visit to the halibut canning factory which is this hundred-man-

town's only industry. Here are preserved annually several hundred thousand cans of the most delectable fish for shipment to Denmark.



Photo Melkon.

**Dick Salmon with large cod jigged while stormbound
in Godthaab Fiord.**

Here we waited a brief time for the *Peary*, and on her arrival we got under weigh for Sukkertoppen, a town of six hundred, and the largest in all Greenland. We were hospitably welcomed by Governor Langskov, who extended us a cordial welcome and the freedom of the city. His welcome

was in strong contrast to the chilly reception farther up the coast, and we felt that we had once more arrived among friends. In every way possible, he and his charming family entertained us, and we did our best to return their hospitality. That night we gave the entire population a treat by showing our choicest films at the schoolhouse.

To thread our way through the unlighted town was a hazardous proceeding. Since the way to the schoolhouse was little better than a swampy trail, and ankle deep in mud over a considerable portion of its length, we had our troubles. Once we nearly walked off the sea-wall; again we nearly skidded down an abrupt and rocky hill. But at last we arrived at the schoolhouse which was pitch dark, owing to the fact that the oil lamps had not yet arrived. After considerable trouble, however, with the aid of a feeble flashlight, we managed to set up the projector and the screen. Then the population arrived, and the show began.

Being more nearly civilized, these people took far more interest in our regular cinema dramas than did the northern Eskimos, in fact these people are not really Eskimos at all, but three-quarters European.

After the pictures we went up to the Governor's house for refreshments. There we were delightfully entertained by the Governor, his genial wife and his charming daughter, and there we were served with Danish coffee, which we all agreed was the most aromatic coffee we had ever drunk. Moreover it was enriched with real cow's cream—the first we had had since leaving Sydney. The cow that gave this cream is probably one of the northernmost cows in the world, but the cream showed no sign of having been affected by the latitude, and it tasted better than it used to at home.

The following morning, Sunday, the Commander announced that we had all been invited to attend the church service. This, we learned, was to be conducted entirely in the Eskimo language, for the people there still speak Eskimo though they have lost nearly all other similarity to the real Eskimos through their having bred with Europeans.

At ten o'clock we heard the church bells ringing, and the Commander called all aboard for those going ashore. A short row put us at the dock, and in a few moments we were at the church. The population was there arranged in respectful lines awaiting our arrival before entering the church—one of many courtesies accorded us in this hospitable settlement.

We entered the church. It was not far different from those at home. An organ at the left, the ornate altar in the center, a pulpit at the right, and behind the altar several oil paintings representing Biblical scenes comprised the main part of the furnishings. Garbed in his ecclesiastical robes, the Lutheran minister intoned the opening chant; then the congregation struck up a hymn, the tune of which I had often heard in the old Hill School chapel. But the words had all been translated into Eskimo, and a bizarre effect was produced through the combination of the familiar music and the outlandish words. We found the service most interesting until the sermon. That lasted for nearly an hour, and to sit on hard board benches and listen to words, the import of which we had no conception, was to say the least trying!

After the service and lunch on the ship, we went to the house of Mr. Neilson, the chief trader. There we shared the hospitality of Mr. Neilson, and his attractive wife and daughter, this being one of many pleasant occasions that we spent in their home.

We had now experienced many of the delightful customs and courtesies which so endear the memory of days spent in Greenland, but one desire that still remained with us was to attend a Greenland dance such as we had seen depicted in the Commander's films. Great was our delight, therefore, when the village lads and lasses the next day accosted us with the word "danswa." Through the interpreter we learned that this combination of Eskimo-Danish meant "big dance."



A good Eskimo puppy.



Typical winter home of South Greenland Eskimo.



Eskimo girls of Holsteinborg, Mixture of Danish, Spanish, English and Eskimo.

That evening we put on our best clothes and glossiest sealskin boots—the Greenland dancing pump de rigueur. After our toilet was complete, we repaired to the cooper's shop, then utilized as a dance hall. We made our way through the assembled crowd, and entered the long, low room which was lighted by only three or four smoky candles. All decked in their most elaborate finery, the girls were ranged along the wall, and a short distance removed from them stood the young bucks. Against the white sila-paks of the males, the colorful feminine costumes made a pleasing contrast. This costume consisted first of all of a pair of elaborately dyed and embroidered sealskin boots, with tops of fine linen on which is sewed lace. These reach almost to the hips. Tucked into the top of these are tight-fitting sealskin pants with a broad, colorful strip of leather running down the front. Around the upper part of the body was fitted a bodice lined with eiderdown, and over this was a facing of ornate velvet. Around their necks and reaching half-way to the waist was a wide, artistically beaded collar of which no two were alike in design and workmanship. About their heads each wore a ribbon. A red ribbon was worn by the maidens; a blue ribbon by the married ones, and a black ribbon by the widows. For one who was a mother, but who was not in the last two categories, a green ribbon was worn—a later learned fact which explained why some of us were greeted with smiling refusals to accept green ribbon in exchange for furs and trinkets.

Soon arrived the Governor and his lady and their daughter, as did also Mr. Neilson and his family. This was the signal for the dance to begin, and the orchestra struck up a lively tune. The orchestra, by the way, consisted of a wheezy accordion which seemed reasonably in tune except on the very high C's. This accordion was manipulated by a relay of players who spelled each other while each took his turn at dancing.

The dancing itself consisted of a series of gyrations and whirls which made the Charleston appear like Walter Camp's setting up exercises in a home for old ladies. It is made up of measures of everything from the hornpipe to the hula hula—fragments of dances contributed by sailors from the seven seas, and well suited to the cosmopolitan blood of many of these children of mischance.

The fun was fast and furious, and the night merrily tripped along “on light fantastic toe” until at last the candles guttered in their sockets and went out, leaving the party whirling about in the darkness. This incident in no way dimmed the enjoyment of the occasion, and there was many a close shave and tight squeeze before the party broke up.

CHAPTER XIII

STORM AND STRESS AND—HOME!

AFTER several days of the gay and intimate life of this “Venice of the North,” so-called because of its many waterways and numerous islands, and the Latin temperament of its inhabitants, we regretfully set sail for Godthaab. There we loaded fuel oil and also visited some very interesting Norse ruins dating back to the year 1000 A.D. These were sixty miles up a fiord, not far from the spot where Nansen came down from the ice-cap after his first crossing of Greenland. On the way to these ruins we had a most delightful sail in the midst of the Alpine scenery we had observed on our first sighting of Greenland. We spent an interesting day rambling about these ruins, after which we returned to Godthaab.



View of Godthaab with statue of Hans Egede, first missionary to the Eskimos of Greenland.



Norse church at head of Godthaab Fiord, probably built about 1100 A. D.

Upon our return to Godthaab we were received and delightfully entertained by Governor Simony and his wife. There we met many of the notables of the settlement, and we also visited the “university,” a sort of a glorified high school comprising a gymnasium and an academic building.

For several days a frightful hurricane delayed our departure for home, but at last came clear weather, and we pointed our nose to the southward. We were homeward bound!



In rough weather, off Nova Scotia, homeward bound.



Photo Brust.

The *Bowdoin* detained by the storm at Monhegan.

Sixteen hours out of Godthaab the barometer took an ominous drop, and a heavy wind and sea rolled up from the southeastward. Soon we were forced to heave to under storm canvas. The seas were tremendous. Great mountains of water came hurtling over the deck nearly sweeping away our deck cargo, in fact one barrel of gasoline drifted over the rail, so deep was the water on deck, and the boats were also engulfed, held only by their stout lashings. Drenched to the skin and chilled to the bone we worked at tightening the lashings on the barrels, and soon all was secure.

Below decks everything was sadly awry. The hatches were battened down, thereby excluding the entrance of all air, and the deck, which had been strained in the ice, leaked badly, and trickles of water soaked both our bunks and ourselves. To these discomforts was added the noxious fumes of coal gas which came from the galley stove. Owing to these upsetting conditions all hands became seasick, and taking a trick at the wheel became the sheerest agony. When my trick came, I struggled into my clothes, donned my oilskins, and made my way to the deck on unsteady feet. Staggering over the seething deck I made my way aft and took over the wheel from my pallid and gagging colleague. All alone I sat there for two hours with the great mounds of water crashing over the bow and sweeping aft in a rushing torrent. It was indeed an awe-inspiring spectacle, and in spite of my upset insides I could not help but admire the grandeur and wild beauty of it all. It brought home to me the insignificance of man in the face of nature aroused.

As I looked out over the rolling green of the angry water it somehow brought back to me the quiet peace and orderly beauty of the close-cropped lawns of The Hill. I contrasted my present woes to that of a few months previous when I wandered book in hand in the shadow of its stately cloisters, with nature at rest and with no responsibility. A sudden wild lurch of the vessel recalled my mind to my present task, and I again concentrated my attention on wheel and compass.

For three days we fought on through a bleak and stormy sea towards Labrador. Those three days were the worst I ever experienced at sea, and few of the other members of the crew, even the Commander himself, could remember worse, but at last the bold headland of Cape Mugford broke the dreary expanse of tumbling billows. This sight of land was a tonic to our sea-racked bodies, and with renewed buoyancy we pushed on. By nightfall

the sea had moderated, and life took on a cheerier tinge. Once again the sizzle and sputter of cooking food was sweet music to our ears, and for the first time in days there was an inward response to the savory odors which came from the galley. Even Doctor Koelz emerged from his refuge behind the ice-box and consented to take a glass of water, a sure sign that we were once again in calm weather. After he recovered his equilibrium, his first thought was for his pet goose which he kept in a cage on deck. He dashed up to see how it had fared, but alas! the poor goose had been drowned. The Doctor was stricken with grief, and all hands joined him in mourning the loss of his pet.

After a peaceful night's run we arrived early the next morning at Jack Lane's Bay and at once made our way up to Abie's home. There we spent the day recuperating and getting thoroughly rested. At dawn on the day following we were once more under weigh. A few hours put us in Hopedale where we unloaded the troublesome gasoline. Then we headed out through Flagstaff Tickle for the open sea and Battle Harbor. During this run I experienced one of the finest nights of the entire voyage. It was cold with frost forming on the ropes and on the deck. The perfect clarity of the sky and the magnificence of the flashing stars along with the beautiful full moon, with the wavering aurora in the north formed a picture of such brilliance and splendor that I was loath to go below at the end of my watch.

The next day we reached Battle Harbor. We had made a fine run down The Labrador, but we could not afford to loiter as the season was far advanced, and we were two weeks behind schedule. Therefore early the next morning we were once again on the way on the next to the last lap headed for Sydney. Here we were greeted by a delegation of newspaper men and Mr. Hildebrand of the National Geographic Society. They welcomed us back to civilization in regal style. But we could not long linger in their pleasant company, and in five hours we were once again leaving Sydney astern—*headed for Home!*

We were flying on around Scateri wafted southward by a fair wind. But as we neared Halifax the wind hauled to the southwest and swept upon us with a force unparalleled by any hurricane that even the Commander had ever seen. It was far worse than any through which we had previously passed. In an astonishingly short time the surface of the sea was a series of steep and treacherous ridges which struck us from every side. Luckily the mainsail

had been taken in before dark, but the foresail and jumbo were still up. The Commander immediately despatched Melkon and Dick Salmon to take in the jumbo, while he gripped the wheel. I was busily engaged in rescuing the loose articles on deck when suddenly a towering sea crashed over the bow, and leaving the wheel to me the Commander dashed forward to the aid of the two men there. I seized the wheel and put her hard over to hold her bow in the wind. The engine was running full blast. The force of the wind and the sea was so great that the vessel was literally pushed backward and began shipping seas over the stern.

This was indeed a most precarious situation with the seas breaking aboard from all sides, and seeing that the engine could not hold the vessel in the wind against the seas, I eased her off a few points to relieve the grim danger of being pooped,—a danger almost unprecedented for a vessel heading into the seas. This easing off had the desired effect, and as the boys had taken in the staysail, I was able to fill away the foresail, and we were soon bounding along again in comparative safety. It took all my strength to hold that bucking wheel against the terrific forces striving to throw it up. Suddenly the cover of the wheelbox was lifted out from under me by the force of the wind and went flying off to leeward, and as the deck was heeled at such a terrific angle that it was practically impossible to stand on it with the seas breaking around my knees, I got into the wheelbox and thus managed to keep going.

Soon the Commander, Dick and Melkon returned from forward, and we settled down to ride it out as best we might. Suddenly an ominous slatting sounded through the shrill scream of the wind in the rigging. Holding our hands before our faces to shield them from the cutting spray, we fought our way forward to investigate. A hasty glance revealed that our foresail had been blown loose from the gaff laceline. This was a dangerous situation as the sail was likely to thrash to pieces. The Commander immediately gave the word to call all hands. In a moment Robbie came piling up from the cabin, and under his direction we started to haul down the sail. The Commander held the vessel in the wind while we labored. Five of us seized the downhaul, but we were ineffectually dragged back and forth across the deck by the terrible thrashing of the sail. At last I managed to catch a turn over a belaying pin, and then inch by inch we swayed it down. Luck was with us, and down it came without tearing. We were greatly relieved to have

this important sail safe on deck with no further damage than the broken lachline. It required fast work to save it. This filled out an active and exciting evening.

Now the only reasonable course of action was to heave to and wait for the storm to abate, as it could not long blow with the fury it now displayed. But the little *Bowdoin* was slowly driven out to sea, since even with her engine going at full speed she was no match for the force of the gale. There she was flung about through the night, and there was little rest for our tired watch.

Morning at last dawned, and with it came sunlight and calmer weather, and by the time we again came on deck the vessel had resumed her course. The sparkling miles flew by, and before dark we were off Cape Sable. All day we had held our own in a race with the *Peary*, which had joined us off Halifax after the storm. But at Cape Sable the wind fell calm, and she soon forged ahead and was lost in the night.

All that night and all the next day the *Bowdoin* ploughed steadily onward, and at four o'clock the next afternoon Matinicus Rock, the farthest outpost of Maine, hove in sight, shortly to be followed by our goal—Monhegan Island. Not long afterwards we rounded the Island, and just before sundown we dropped anchor in Dead Man's Cove.

We had hoped to make an early start on Saturday morning for Wiscasset where we were expected by many of our friends and well-wishers. But at three o'clock in the morning we were awakened by the shrill scream of a storm humming through the rigging. This storm later developed into the great gale of October 10th, known to every fisherman on the coast. We did not, however, immediately despair of being able to make the run to Wiscasset. When we roused out at breakfast time the wind had shown no sign of abating, and one look out to sea sufficed to demonstrate that any thought of departure that day was but an idle wish. I put my head above the level of the hatch and glanced about. The vessel was wallowing in a heavy swell which came rolling into Dead Man's Cove from the west. The anchor chain stood out as taut and stiff as a bar of iron. The vessel's stern tailed dangerously close to the wicked rocks astern which reared their ugly heads through a wall of breaking seas and flying spume. As the morning wove on, the storm increased in violence and our situation became precarious. Twice

the sturdy fishermen of Monhegan bucked their way out from the inner harbor to warn us that our anchorage would soon become untenable, and it behooved us to get out while we still could. Eventually our stern approached within a few feet of the rocks, and the Commander decided we should have to go around the island into the inner harbor. To take the vessel out in the teeth of that roaring hurricane with a bent propeller such as we had, was a feat not lightly to be undertaken.

But as it was imperative, the Commander reluctantly gave the order to up anchor. Inch by inch our powerful winch brought the chain aboard. Soon it was up and down and the engine was started. Then a few more revolutions of the windlass and we were clear. The engine telegraph stood at full speed and yet the vessel barely moved. We watched breathlessly. Would she make it? Slowly the gap between us and the rocks widened. The vessel plunged her bow deep in the seas. All undaunted the little *Bowdoin* crept to windward. At last we rounded the outermost cape and with a sigh of relief the Commander put up the helm and we fairly blew to leeward around the remaining stretch of coast.

In a few moments we were safe once more in the inner harbor and the shrieking seventy-five mile an hour gale was powerless to tear us from our moorings. We were indeed fortunate to make a safe harbor as many a great ship disappeared in that hurricane and was never seen again. From all parts of the Atlantic seaboard reports rained in of shipwreck and disaster.

All that day and all the next the gale raged with unmitigated severity. On Sunday, however, the barometer began to rise and patches of blue sky showed through the leaden pale overhead. These signs that the weather would soon be on the mend were welcome to all hands, from the crew to the visitors. It appeared probable that a start might be made Monday morning. As it would still be rough, the ladies who had joined us at Battle Harbor were requested to go up to Wiscasset on the *Peary* that they might be spared the discomforts of a trip on the smaller vessel.

Monday morning arrived and the *Peary* gave a long toot on her siren and pulled out from the dock. She passed quite close to us and we observed that her decks were nearly deserted. Where were the ladies? In a few moments we knew. Boat after boat appeared, loaded to the gunwales with their numbers. Not more than a handful had gone on the *Peary*; contrary to all

instructions they had refused to go on our consort, and insisted on going on the *Bowdoin*. We stared aghast at their temerity to disobey the Commander's request. They came aboard with an air of assurance which showed that a well-planned conspiracy had been launched, but their disobedience was left unnoticed, strange to say. I think perhaps it would be more correct to those who have had experience with the wily sex to say, "As might have been expected." A good many of them were soon seasick, but in a short time we had come into the quiet waters of Boothbay Harbor. Up the green bordered channels we picked our way, our decks crowded with cheering visitors. Slowly we reeled off the miles until at last we entered the Sheepscot, and then—then with flags flying we proceeded up the river, and at last amidst the roar of steam whistles and the cheers of the multitude assembled on the shore, the Commander uttered those long awaited words: "Let go."

Soon the visitors had departed, and we were left alone on our sturdy little ship. We had sailed six thousand miles, crossed the Arctic Circle twice, fought through the dread reaches of Melville Bay, launched our planes over the unknown Arctic, and returned all unscathed. Now all was ended: "Timakeza," as the Eskimo would say.

Two days later, as my train rumbled over the bridge, I looked out and saw the little *Bowdoin* lying quiet and peaceful in the tranquil waters of Wiscasset, her long voyage over. As she receded into the distance I recalled the happy days spent under the shadow of her masts, and in my heart the hope was born that once again I might tread her deck and feel the long ocean roll beneath my feet—outward bound!

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES:

Obvious typographical errors have been corrected.

Inconsistencies in hyphenation have been standardized.

Illustrations have been moved to the nearest paragraph breaks. In some cases, these breaks are on different pages. The List of Illustrations has been updated to reflect these changes.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A BOY'S-EYE
VIEW OF THE ARCTIC ***

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